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**WH-Interrogatives in Spoken French: a Corpus-Based Analysis of their
Form and Function**

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Form and Function**

by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother Jenelle Street Franklyn.

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WH-Interrogatives in Spoken French: a Corpus-Based Analysis of their Form and Function

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An intriguing aspect of the French language is its complex system of interrogative structures; there exist many question variants to express the same content. For example, *Où est-ce que tu vas? Où tu vas? C'est où que tu vas? Où c'est que tu vas?* and *Tu vas où?* are potentially all ways of expressing “Where are you going?” In this dissertation, I examine the use of WH-questions from the Barnes-Blyth Corpus (1984) of Spoken French. Coveney (2002) contributed one of the first truly comprehensive studies on variation of interrogatives in Spoken French. This dissertation builds upon his work by contributing more in depth pragmatic analyses plus a more complete investigation of the system at play.

My study begins with a WH-question inventory, categorization and description of structures found in the corpus and elsewhere when appropriate. In contrast to studies attributing variation to socio-stylistic choices, according to the data in this study, there is structural diversity of French interrogative structures within a single socio-stylistic context explainable by pragmatic differences. Therefore, Lambrecht's (1994)

information structure framework is applied to the interrogatives in the corpus. Interrogatives prove to be a complicated case for information structure analysis; only the activation of the open proposition serves as a useful indicator of question structure choice. Highly active open propositions are often realized with *in situ* structures whereas inactive open propositions are often realized with fronted structures. These findings are consistent with initial observations by Coveney.

Further, I examine the system involved in interrogative choice, which incorporates many areas of grammar including pragmatics, socio-stylistics, syntax and semantics. I propose the concept of *answerability* as an umbrella term to explain several seemingly diverse factors affecting WH-questions use. I explore the application of Optimality Theory to contextualized interrogative choices since it permits a complete analysis by allowing a combination of constraints from the various pertinent components of grammar.

In conclusion, by implementing this combination of analyses, I not only contribute to the long-standing discussion regarding interrogative structure usage in French, but I also clarify the explanatory power of pragmatics and Optimality Theory for this particularly complex system.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

C'est par sa polymorphie instrumentale que l'interrogation française se distingue de celle des autres langues romanes, des langues germaniques (Wandruszka, 1970, p. 76).

A remarkable aspect of spoken French is its multitude of forms for expressing direct interrogatives. This variation exists for both yes-no questions (also referred to as total questions) and WH-questions (also referred to as constituent or partial questions). Take into account first the possible forms for formulating the yes-no question.

- a. Est-ce qu'il vient?
- b. Il vient?
- c. Vient-il?
- d. Il vient-ti/tu?

All of the above are translatable as "Is he coming?" The variation involving yes-no questions in Spoken French, although worthy of investigation in its own right (see Borillo 1978, Poplack & Elsig 2006) is not treated in this particular study.

The focus of this dissertation is the form and function of direct WH-questions in Spoken French. WH-questions in contrast to yes-no questions require an answer that is not "yes" or "no". Therefore in contrast to a question such as "Is he coming?" this work focuses on for example, a question like "When is he coming?" the answer to which could be a large range of responses. Although the term WH-question is admittedly anglocentric, for purposes of consistency, it is used throughout this dissertation on French interrogatives.

These constituent questions by definition contain an interrogative expression. Interrogative expressions in French are generally divided into the categories of either

pronouns or adverbs plus a small set of determiners. Table 1.1 highlights common question expressions found in French constituent, or WH-questions.

Table 1.1

<i>Pronouns</i>	<i>Adverbs</i>
<i>qui</i> (who)	<i>quand</i> (when)
<i>qu'est-ce qui</i> (what)	<i>où</i> (where)
<i>que</i> (what)	<i>comment</i> (how)
<i>quoi</i> (what)	<i>pourquoi</i> (why)
<i>lequel, laquelle, lesquels, lesquelles</i> (which one(s))	<i>combien</i> (how many)
<i>Determiners</i>	
<i>quel, quelle, quels, quelles</i> (which)	

Table 1.2 presents some of the most common WH-interrogatives in French. Note that the possible syntactic variation for WH-questions is strikingly more diverse than for yes-no questions.

Table 1.2

Example (“Where are you going?”)	Structural Representation
1) <i>Où?</i>	Q
2) <i>Où tu vas?</i>	Q proV
3) <i>Où vas-tu?</i>	Q V-pro
4) <i>Où que tu vas?</i>	Q que proV
5) <i>Où est-ce que tu vas</i>	Q esq proV
6) <i>Où c'est que tu vas?</i>	Q c'est que proV
7) <i>C'est où que tu vas?</i>	c'est Q que proV
8) <i>Tu vas où?</i>	proV Q

Q=question expression; V= verb; **pro**=clitic pronoun; **que**= complementizer; **esq**= interr. marker *est-ce que*

One of the most important areas of discussion for the purposes of this dissertation is the placement of the interrogative expression within the interrogative, in particular whether the interrogative expression is found in front of or behind the subject-verb component of the question. For example, in Table 1.2, Examples 1-6 have sentence initial interrogative expressions whereas in Examples 7-8 the question expression is post-verbal. When discussing (the differences among) the structures, in addition to the position of the question expression, we are interested in the word order of the Subject-Verb (SV) component and the use of clefts or question morphemes.

In Table 1.2, Structure 1 is the most syntactically simple WH-interrogative consisting of the question expression (Q in shorthand) alone. Structures 2-6 are the French interrogative structures commonly referred as “fronted”. Structure 2 has a fronted question expression with canonical subject and verb position. Structure 3 has a fronted question expression followed by pronoun inversion. Structure 4 is the same as 2 except for the presence of the ubiquitous but not well understood complementizer *que*. Structure 5 contains the well-known question morpheme *est-ce que*. Structures 6 and 7 involve clefts, which in this case utilize the components *c’est...que*. Finally, structure 8 lies in sharp contrast to the other structures since it is an *in situ* structure with a post-verbal question expression. A more in depth discussion of the syntax of these structures follows in Chapter 3. The goal of this dissertation is to elucidate the potential communicative and pragmatic differences among these forms that are, in most cases, semantically equivalent.

Interrogatives are an essential component of spoken language since interaction necessarily involves exchange of information. In addition interrogative structures have strong associations with contextual usage. Speakers have intuitions regarding the appropriateness and evaluation for the gamut of structures. The next section introduces several of these elements of interrogative usage.

1.1 CONTEXTS OF INTERROGATIVE USAGE

Interrogative forms in French are tightly linked to social evaluation. Any discussion of French syntactic variation requires a systematic assessment of the sociolinguistic variables at play. Within variation, according to Ball (2000), there are three dimensions at work: speaking versus writing, formality versus informality and the social level of the speakers.

The focus of this dissertation is on interrogatives in Spoken French rather than written French. This distinction is crucial to the discussion due to the recognized differences between these modes of language. Riegel et al. (1994) offer this succinct and general contrast between spoken and written language: “Le rapport de l’oral et de l’écrit change avec le temps: alors que l’oral continue d’évoluer régulièrement, l’écrit tend à se fixer, et le décalage entre les deux codes s’accroît, d’autant plus que l’écrit, devenu autonome, n’est plus un simple système substitutif de l’oral” (p.29). The contrast between modes of language is particularly pronounced in French. According to Vendryès (1939), “L’écart entre la langue écrite et la langue parlée est de plus en plus grand. Ni la syntaxe, ni le vocabulaire sont les mêmes”(p. 303).

The spoken-written contrast of French is particularly striking in the context of interrogatives. According to Pinchon (1967) “l’interrogation se traduit, en français moderne, par deux systèmes différents selon qu’il s’agit de langue écrite ou de langue parlée (p. 283)”. According to this repartition, written French is more restrictive and mostly uses inversion whereas spoken French has more syntactic variety.

According to Ball, certain question structures are associated with different levels of French. The concepts of register and style are essential to our understanding of the use of French interrogatives. Not all Spoken French shares the same socio-stylistic evaluation. Indeed, question formation is a much-cited example of socio-stylistic

variation in Spoken French. In fact the variation of interrogatives in French is often explained by differences in register or style. One of the goals of this dissertation is to determine to what extent carefully defined socio-stylistic factors elucidate interrogative usage.

1.2 THE PRESENT STUDY

Examine the list enumerated by Gadet (1989, p. 138) in which she gives theoretically possible combinations for the question “when did he come?”

quand est-il venu?
quand / il est venu?
quand qu’il est venu?
quand est-ce qu’il est venu?
quand c’est qu’il est venu?
quand est-ce que c’est qu’il est venu?
quand c’est que c’est qu’il est venu?
quand que c’est que c’est qu’il est venu?
c’est quand qu’il est venu?
c’est quand est-ce qu’il est venu?
c’est quand que c’est qu’il est venu?
il est venu quand?
il est venu quand est-ce?
il est venu quand ça?
quand ça / il est venu?
quand ça qu’il est venu?
quand ça est-ce qu’il est venu?
quand ça c’est qu’il est venu?

As can be seen, Table 1.2 above presented a rather conservative outline of French interrogatives. How many of these structures are actually in use? Wandruszka provides a well-phrased call to investigation of this variation:

Que signifie cette étonnante polymorphie instrumentale? Est-ce seulement, résultat des multiples facteurs hétérogènes ayant agi sur la langue française à travers les siècles, une surproduction de formes plus ou moins équivalentes, différenciées seulement en tant que disponibilités stylistiques, les unes intégrées à des niveaux de style différents [...] les autres choisies pour des raisons

d'euphonie ou de rythme, ou encore pour le simple plaisir de la variation?
(Wandruszka, 1970, pgs 65-66)

What is the best way to describe French interrogative forms and what explains their patterning? As a whole, the discussions found in the literature thus far remain inconclusive regarding the function and the role of the numerous structures. This dissertation is a multi-faceted study of WH-Interrogative forms in modern spoken French. The variety of forms as exemplified by Gadet lead to this particular research question: Why are there so many forms with the same semantic content available to speakers to ask a question? A possible yet unsatisfying answer to this question would be free variation. In contrast, this dissertation seeks to establish and analyze the principled reasons for variation in French WH-Interrogatives.

1.2.1 Corpus and Analysis

A defining characteristic of this dissertation is its reliance on the analysis of interrogatives from a single corpus instead of basing it on intuition, a comparison of several corpora or anecdotal collections of utterances. This particular type of analysis allows for an investigation of patterns of usage rather than a collection of all possible structures. In his discussion on the importance of corpus linguistics, Wallace Chafe (1992) states:

The bottom line is that the collection and analysis of conversational corpora is absolutely essential to a fuller understanding of language and the mind. Corpora-based observations and theorizing have to be supplemented with introspections, inventions, and experiments, all of which can carry us beyond the accidental limits of a corpus. But introspections and inventions without corpora are fatally limiting. Without conversational corpora, in particular, we can hardly hope to make significant progress (p. 89).

The corpus used for collection and analysis of interrogative structures for this dissertation is the Blyth-Barnes Corpus of Spoken French. This corpus was collected by

Dr. Betsy Barnes in 1984 at the University of Minnesota. The recorded discussions took place over 5 sessions at the home of Dr. Barnes. The corpus involves five speakers plus occasional comments from the researcher. Sessions I-III are with the three female speakers only; sessions IV-V include both male and female speakers. All participants are young-adult native speakers of French teaching French language at the University of Minnesota.

Analysis of interrogatives in this dissertation is deliberately limited to a single corpus in order to eliminate sociological variation such as age, class and genre. Further, Sessions IV-V are not included in this study in order to avoid potential gender variation. What results is a network of speakers who are not a representative sample. Therefore the issue of *representativeness* (see Biber, 1994), which is paramount in corpus-based studies is treated cautiously in this dissertation. The purpose of choosing a closed network with many variables held constant is that it permits focus on syntactic and pragmatic conditioning, which is the goal of this study.

This particular corpus was chosen because of the highly interactive nature of the discussion among the participants. The casual atmosphere of the data collection permitted relaxed information exchange thereby creating a context where question and answer pairs were a natural part of the progression of conversation. These choices for data analysis distinguish this dissertation from previous studies on French interrogatives. For example, although much of Coveney's work is much broader in terms of sociolinguistic scope, his data collection based on interviews (1996) was not ideal for eliciting interrogatives.

In Sections I-III of the Barnes-Blyth Corpus, all three participants are women. Evelyne was 27 at the time of the recording. She was born in Bourges, France. She is a native speaker of French. No other languages were spoken in the home. She considers

herself to be between middle and upper class. Christine was 21 at the time of the recording. She was born in Saint Denis, France. She is a native speaker of French; no other languages were spoken in the home. She sees herself as part of the working class. Martine was 24 at the time of the recording. She was born in Algiers, Algeria but moved to France when she was 7. She claims both French and Arabic to be her native languages. She spoke both Arabic and French in the home. She views herself to be a part of the upper middle class.

For the purposes of this dissertation, all WH-interrogatives in Sessions I-III of the corpus were counted, categorized and analyzed. The data collected from the corpus were then used to systematically evaluate hypotheses and findings concerning interrogative usage in previous studies. In addition, several well-accepted linguistic concepts were tested against the data set to assess their explanatory power for this particular phenomenon. Finally, several new concepts are offered as viable tools key to our understanding of interrogative choice. This work was performed in light of past research but relying solely on the forms and utterances found in the single communicative context provided by the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

1.2.2 Approach and Organization

Given the complexity of the phenomenon under scrutiny in this dissertation, the approach of this study was formulated in an effort to peel away the intricacies layer by layer. French interrogatives have been a popular focus of investigation over the years from multiple perspectives and with numerous goals. Chapter Two gives an overview of major contributions to the study of French WH-Interrogatives while situating the current investigation in an area of needed development. Next, the focus of the dissertation turns to describing and organizing the large number and variety of WH-question forms

available to speakers of French. Chapter Three introduces in a thematic fashion the syntactic structures found in Spoken French. In this chapter, there are several arguments for re-assessing the traditional categorization of frequent interrogative structures. Next, I determine and evaluate the factors that influence the choice of one interrogative structure over another. Chapter Four looks at the interactions of various components of grammar that create a system of interrogatives relying on the data of the Barnes-Blyth corpus. This chapter accomplishes several goals. First it thoroughly investigates and tests previously discussed or suggested parameters of analysis, many of which are attributable to the work of Aidan Coveney. Second it organizes the lengthy and disparate list of factors influencing interrogative choice with umbrella terms and overarching concepts. Finally, it introduces several new concepts, such as answerability and expectedness that are crucial for understanding interrogative usage. With the emergence of important factors for clarifying interrogative use in Chapter Four, Chapter Five presents sample analyses of WH-interrogatives with a discussion of the function and use associated with each structure. Of particular interest are the three most frequent structures found in the Barnes-Blyth corpus: Q proV, proV Q and Q. Still in line with the goal of simplifying and sharpening our understanding of this complex phenomenon, Chapter Six integrates the concepts discussed in Chapter Four into an Optimality Theory analysis.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

The literature on WH-interrogative structures in French is vast and varied. This chapter summarizes and analyzes significant contributions to the discussion on interrogatives. These previous studies provide important background especially in the areas of taxonomy, frequency, syntactic description and socio-stylistic evaluation. In contrast, relatively few studies have undertaken the goal of explaining the pragmatic function of the varying structures available to speakers.

The variation available to speakers of French when forming an interrogative has long been of keen interest to French grammarians. Section 2.1 summarizes several of their viewpoints. Section 2.2 is dedicated to outlining the history and breadth of attention to French interrogatives in studies with less prescriptive agendas than seen in 2.1. Section 2.3 assesses findings on specific interrogative structures.

2.1 GRAMMARIANS' PERSPECTIVES ON INTERROGATIVES

Guiraud (1962) in his discussion of interrogatives, stated: “*Qui c’est qui vient? Qui qui vient? Qui qui vient-ti? Ces monstres reflètent la crise de l’interrogation*” (p. 91). This conservative and prescriptive viewpoint is representative of many of the commentaries on interrogatives in spoken French. Further, Wilmet (1997) asserts a common belief in the register associations of interrogative structures: “*Entre le pôle V-S [inversion]... et le pôle S-V [in situ]... la langue emprunte dans différents registres des sentiers tortueux*” (p. 536). The opinions and analyses of interrogatives in Spoken French by several well-known grammarians follow.

The variety of syntactically complex interrogatives in French is strongly associated with spoken language, a mode popularly disparaged by some grammarians. Martinon (1927) in his work on correct spoken language in contrast with written and other less formal spoken forms (i.e. *familier*) began with the premise that “*il est assez probable que jamais en France on n’a aussi mal parlé qu’aujourd’hui*” (p. vii). In particular, he refers to the common use of *est-ce que* as inelegant or even mediocre.

Frei (1929), decidedly not a normativist, begins his discussion of the “*pullulement des formes concurrentes*” for spoken interrogatives by describing them as extraordinarily complicated. He explains this diversity of forms as arising from the desire to remove inversion from spoken language. He labels interrogatives with *est-ce que* as correct yet not completely satisfactory for the desire to be completely inversion-free. He describes the *in situ* structure as the most advanced of spoken language since it is a creation resembling affirmatives. As a result of the *in situ* structure becoming more of the norm, structures like *Où que tu vas?* and *Où c’est que tu vas?* are used for expressive purposes.

Von Wartburg and Zumthor (1958) in their work on French syntax dedicate a chapter to interrogative and exclamative expressions. They claim that interrogative utterances contain more affective elements than affirmatives. Interrogative structures with the question expression *in situ* arose from the general spoken tendency for a syntactic order subject-verb. Their analysis surveys interrogatives for each interrogative expression. In particular they take into account the various means of reinforcement of the interrogative expressions including placing the *accent d’intensité* on the question word, repetition, phatic expressions and forms of *est-ce que*. Further reinforcements are associated with registers; the structure *Q est-ce que c’est que* is considered *familier* whereas structures like *Où que tu vas?* are labeled *populaire*.

Chevalier et al. (1964) in the *Grammaire Larousse* examine modern interrogatives in French according to the diachronic and widespread tendency to maintain the syntactic order of SVO in all types of utterances. Additionally, there is a trend to reinforce expressivity. As a result, the use of *est-ce que/qui* is very widespread. This syntactic tendency also leads to the use of structures like *Où c'est que tu vas?* and *Où tu vas?* in relaxed speech. Nevertheless, Chevalier et al. claim that inversion remains more frequent than *est-ce que* interrogatives with pronoun subjects. These modern tendencies however are in conflict with interrogative structures emphasized in schools. “*Ce sont ces soucis très subtils de répartition, d'accent, de mélodie qui rendent l'exposé des tours interrogatifs plus semblable à un buisson touffu qu'à l'arbre dépouillé dont rêvent les syntacticiens structuralistes*” (p. 96). Even so, they assert that “*la grande abondance des constructions offre-t-elle à l'utilisateur une riche gamme de nuances*” (p. 91).

Georgin (1967) blames the growth of (incorrect) variants of question structures on the frequent use of interrogatives in conversation. Sentences without inversion such as *Où tu vas?*, according to Georgin “*font un effet très vulgaire*” (p. 77). Interrogatives with the locution *est-ce que* are troubling since its juxtaposition with an initial interrogative expression is awkward. In contrast, *in situ* interrogatives contain “*déplacement négligé*” out of a desire to accentuate the interrogative expression. Even worse, according to Georgin, are interrogatives like *Où que tu vas?* and *Où c'est que tu vas?*.

Grevisse's *Le Bon Usage* (1993) recognizes three types of structures when the interrogative expression is found pre-verbally: 1) an inverted form exemplified by *quand pars-tu?* that is referred to as “*type soigné*”, 2) an interrogative accompanied by a form of *est-ce que* as in *quand est-ce que tu pars?* 3) what is referred to as “*relâché*” as in *quand tu pars?* (p. 591). The interrogative expression *in situ* as in *tu pars quand?* is the “*type familier*”. In the description of the usages of *est-ce que*, it is noted that they are

“considérés comme peu élégants et lourds” (p. 605). This particular idea had previously been seen in Grevisse (1967) who in describing periphrastic forms states: “C’est un entassement un peu lourd, sans doute, mais qui exprime avec une vigoureuse netteté l’idée interrogative” (p.59-60). In contrast the *in situ* form is said to be *familier* but widespread across social boundaries.

LeGoffic (1994) in a lengthy discussion of interrogatives in French weighs them in contrast with exclamatory utterances. He believes that given the variety of ways of indicating interrogativity, the only unifying and essential feature of interrogatives is the use of a question expression in the utterance. When discussing the uses and interpretations of the various structures, he labels the examples as: *où vas-tu?* (*expression normale*), *tu vas où?* (*familier*), *où tu vas?* (*très familier*), *c’est où que tu vas?* (*relâché*) and *où c’est que tu vas?* (*vulgaire*). In his view, there are clear associations of interrogative type with register.

Price (2003) dedicates a section to the interrogative utterance. He describes the *in situ* construction as non-literary and current yet a “normal, unemphatic way of asking a question” (p. 193). The sentence-initial structure exemplified by *Où tu vas?* is regarded as informal yet acceptable even for use by fluent foreigners. However, the structure such as *Où que tu vas?* is sub-standard and “should therefore be avoided by foreigners, even in informal speech (p. 463)”.

As can be seen in the summaries above, most observations by grammarians account for the diversity of forms for interrogatives as both a spoken phenomenon and as an element of communication strongly tied to levels of language.

2.2 WH-INTERROGATIVES IN FRENCH: BROAD PERSPECTIVES

Published interest in French interrogative forms spans nearly a century. The goals of each study vary significantly: delimiting the forms; searching for teaching implications; ascertaining the differences between spoken and written speech; understanding the syntactic and sociolinguistic variables involved, etc. The diversity in the inquiries themselves confirms the complexity of the issue; interrogatives involve many levels of language. Many analyses looked at both total and constituent questions. I summarize only what is of interest to the discussion of WH-questions.

The first major contribution to interrogative studies in French from the beginning of the 20th century, published by Foulet (1921), was based mostly on observation, but provided a thought-provoking starting point for future analysis. In his seminal contribution, he was interested in the forms and use of interrogatives. He described the diversity of interrogative structures in the oft-quoted phrase as a “*fourmillement de formes*”. He placed interrogative structures into three categories: literary, correct and popular. He acknowledged that speakers are forced to choose among the large number of forms and that the choices have social consequences.

Fromageat (1938) examined interrogatives from all levels of language found in literary texts by Proust, Guitry and Bernard. His impetus for the study was mostly pedagogical. The distinction between WH- and yes-no questions, although acknowledged in the study, is not made clear in the figures or statistics. Even more problematic is a lack of distinction among non-inverted constituent questions. He does nevertheless accentuate the use of structures such as the *in situ* interrogative by educated speakers of French. In addition, he provides many insightful comments on the choice and use of inversion versus *est-ce que*.

The mid 20th century witnessed a growth in interest in French interrogatives. Renchon (1969) continued the work begun by Foulet by examining at length the forms, usage and examples of interrogatives based on literary texts. He relied highly on previous studies and compilations of grammarians. His extensive yet conservative work is comprised of three chapters. The first is dedicated to the systems of interrogation: the history and loss of inversion and what replaced it. The second chapter focuses on the “pathology” of periphrastic (those involving *est-ce que*) structures. The final chapter assimilates the views of grammarians on periphrastic interrogatives.

Also in the mid 20th century, there was a growing interest in French interrogatives from a syntactic point of view. Consistent with the trends of the time, this syntactic perspective was often transformational-generative in nature. Kayne (1972) focused on subject inversion in French interrogatives. His paper discusses the distinct transformations needed for subject-clitic inversion in contrast with stylistic (NP) inversion. His analysis describes complex inversion as similar to subject-clitic inversion rather than as a pronominal copy transformation.

Langacker (1965) provides a transformational description of both constituent and total French interrogatives. His analysis utilizes serial rules to arrive at the array of forms available in French. Again, Langacker (1972) investigates French interrogatives from a syntactic, rule-based perspective. He points out that “French interrogatives are not formally marked in any consistent way” (p. 36). In this paper, he supports his earlier analysis of a three rule (REDuplication, DELetion and PRONominilization) explanation for inversion structures in French. In addition, he attributes the derivation of *qu’est-ce que* type questions to underlying cleft sentences. He also provides thoughtful discussion of the status of *qu’est-ce que* and *est-ce que*, whether they are analyzable, fixed or syntactic idioms.

Obenauer (1976) takes a generative grammar approach to describing the syntax of French interrogatives with the question expressions *combien* and *que*. In the first part of his work, he describes the rules needed to obtain a *combien* interrogative that is separated from its nominal. In the second part of the book, he seeks to define interrogative *que*, specifically whether it is a pronoun or a complementizer. He concludes that it is a complementizer in modern French whereas in 17th century French, both types of *que* co-existed.

Al (1975) studied direct interrogatives in French as part of his general study of grammaticality in generative grammar. He used the Behnstedt (1973) corpus for his analysis. He provided an inventory of the forms, gave a generative description of these forms and then looked at their acceptability (as defined by usage) according to register. He found that he could successfully account for Behnstedt's data with variable rule grammar.

Another area of focus for French interrogatives was a growing interest in the forms, variation and usage of interrogative structures. Gougenheim et al. (1956/1964) undertook what they called the *Français Fondamental* project to provide a description of French for teaching. They based their study and conclusions on 163 recorded conversations. Their conclusions and pedagogical suggestions were based on relative frequency of competing forms. In the case of information questions, they found that more than one-third of their interrogatives with adverbs involved pronoun inversion.

Pohl (1965), in an effort to understand the differences and/or similarities between spoken and written French, studied interrogatives using the data from *Français Fondamental* as well as his own transcriptions of his parents' speech. Not surprisingly, he found that there was less variety in written than in spoken French. However, both modes of language employed inversion. He believed that the less cultured people are,

“plus est net le fossé qui sépare l’oral de l’écrit” (p. 512). However, his overriding belief is that there are no qualitative differences between spoken and written French.

Terry (1970) categorized and analyzed interrogatives from a corpus of contemporary plays dating from 1957-1964. From his impressive corpus of 7,995 questions, he looked for the structural and constituent elements that influenced modes and forms of interrogation. Terry’s linguistic perspective was that of a slot-and-substitution grammar. He divided information eliciting questions into 3 categories: inversion, incomplete syntactic transformation and *est-ce que*. He believed that the extent of structural transformation is influenced by the social class of the speaker. He found that these factors influenced the choice of form: tense, person, lexical identity of verb and negative vs. affirmative. However, he also claimed that “the type of response expected by the speaker as well as his emotional frame of mind are seen in the form of interrogation which he chooses” (p. 107). Overall, he found that inversion was most common. Unfortunately, his choice of categorization, especially the so-called “incomplete syntactic transformation” grouping limits analysis of many common structures in Spoken French.

Wandruzska (1970) demonstrated both the systematic and asystematic polymorphic nature of French interrogatives. He claims that the interrogative system of French serves to distinguish the language from others. According to Wandruzska, in no other language is there the possibility to create a question in accord with style, mode, rhythm, sound and planning. He ends his paper with many open-ended questions including: why did this polymorphy occur in French and not other languages? Why did this polymorphy in French occur within interrogatives and not another category? And can this polymorphy be connected to the attitudes or views of the French? For the most part,

the most important contribution of his paper concerns the stage he sets for French interrogative investigations.

Behnstedt (1973) contributed a seminal quantitative study of interrogatives in spoken French by studying three varieties: *français soutenu*, *français familier* and *français populaire*. These three types of language were operationalized by his observations of a truck driver, the speech of 18 persons over a week and recordings of 4,000 radio interviews and conversations respectively. This study distinguishes itself from previous studies by the use of a corpus of authentic utterances from spontaneous language. His study finds that differences in dialect and/or style influence the choice of WH-interrogative structure. In addition, he looked at interrogative selection through statistical analysis of patterns according to style, question word, nature of subject, identity of verb, the number of syllables in a verb, person, tense, mood, presence of ‘*alors*’ and dislocation. Due to its scope and thoroughness, Behnstedt’s study has served as a point of reference for countless interrogative studies including this particular dissertation.

Ashby (1977), on a much smaller scale continued the type of investigation undertaken by Behnstedt. He used the Malécot (1972) corpus of Middle Class Parisian adults in an attempt to find social differentiation in interrogatives. He believed that his study marked an improvement on earlier contributions of Fromageat, Gugenheim and Pohl. He found three patterns of constituent interrogation: 1) inversion 2) *est-ce que* 3) no transformation (which may be fronted or *in situ* Q). Among the constituent questions, he found pattern 3 to be the most frequent and pattern 1 to be the least frequent. Like Behnstedt, he also found that the question word affected the structure choice. For example, *comment* is most prevalent with pattern 3 whereas *que* is most prevalent with *est-ce que*. The other syntactic elements that affected the structure choice were 1) the

nature of the subject (noun versus pronoun) and 2) the form of the verb (i.e. compound tenses are not compatible with inversion). Ashby also looked at patterns of use demonstrated by demographic sub-groups, formality, style and lexico-semantic properties.

The interest in patterns of language according to social groups continued in the 1980's. Several studies focused on the variable age with respect to interrogative production and use. For example, Söll (1983) examined recordings of 79 nine-year-olds from France who were from all social levels but represented the best students in the class. He compared his results to Terry's but breaks down the syntactic categories more precisely. Out of the 364 questions in the corpus, only 13 involved an inversion structure.

Maintaining the interest in young speakers, Lafontaine & Lardinois (1985) examined elicited interrogative structures produced by native French students aged 7-12 years. The students were divided into three age groups: students in 2ème, 4ème and 6ème. Overall, inversion was the most frequent structure followed by the *in situ* structure. However there was a significant difference between the productions of the younger students on the one hand and the two older groups on the other. Students in 2ème use inversion a lot less frequently than their older counterparts. Compared to an adult population of Belgian journalists whose most frequent structure was also inversion, Lafontaine and Lardinois found that the children have a much more normative pattern for interrogatives across the board. They conclude that with age there is a tendency for the young speakers to approach the language used by the adult population in the study.

Another popular theme involving interrogatives and register is connected to a pedagogical perspective. For example, Joseph (1988) uses interrogatives as primary examples for describing the striking differences between Modern and *New French*.

Students are more likely to encounter New French but students may receive negative social judgment for using New French. They are however taught Modern French. He concludes that the different types of language have created a pedagogical crisis.

Valdman (1986 etc) over the years has used interrogatives as an important yet complicated model for teaching authentic language. Modes, style, register and frequency all play a role in interrogative usage. In an earlier paper on this topic, Valdman (1967) stated that the question is not what interrogative forms should be taught, rather which should be taught first. His response involves three criteria: frequency, complexity and extensiveness. Valdman (2000) believes that traditional language-teaching materials should be updated to reflect pragmatic choices available to speakers for interrogatives. For example, instead of pronoun inversion, the *Q est-ce que* proV should be taught first to anglophone students. However, demonstrating the complexity of the issue, his recommendations and his own implementation of forms in textbooks has not remained consistent over the years.

The studies mentioned thus far were concerned with French from France (and Belgium in Pohl's case). In the 1980's there were several important contributions concerning Canadian French interrogative syntax. The work of both Lefebvre and Fox, summarized below, was extensive and focused on the cross-roads of form and usage.

Lefebvre (1981, 1982,) studied working-class Montreal French within the frameworks of Extended Standard Theory and Labovian variation theory. She found syntactic, social (education) and stylistic (formality) constraints on the distribution of information questions.

Fox (1989) who sees Lefebvre's work as a bridge to her own, examined 1600 yes-no and WH- questions from the Laval corpus of Quebec French using discriminant function analysis according to linguistic, extra-linguistic and discourse factors. The "core

variables” that were consistently selected for analysis of information questions were sentence type, subject type, the status of the verb, the verbal lexical item, frequency and tense and then the number of syllables in the question word. In contrast with the yes-no questions, the constituent question variables were all of linguistic nature. Fox’s contribution is particularly important because it drew conclusions based on frequency.

Another area of concentration regarding French interrogatives has been usage by non-native speakers. Due to their syntactic complexity and their variation in usage and choice, interrogatives provide a particularly challenging aspect of mastering the French language.

Dewaele (1999) looked at the ideolectal variation of interrogative structures among native and non-native speakers of French. He found that non-native speakers avoided non-standard structures like Q proV but did not use the more formal forms systematically. Emphasizing the difficulty for L2 learners of French, he observed that “there is no single descriptive norm of interrogative structures in modern Spoken French” (p. 166).

Flament-Boistrancourt & Debrock (1997) and Flament-Boistrancourt & Cornette (1999) are papers comparing interrogatives of L1 speakers of French to L2 native Dutch speakers of French in various parts of the LANCOM corpus. The former paper investigated a code of politeness in French interrogatives not found in L2 production. The latter concludes that “*bien maîtriser les différentes structures interrogatives du français ne suffisait pas pour bien questionner*” (p. 145) since with questions, the Dutch are seeking information whereas the French are keenly aware of the fact that they are encroaching on the territory/space of another speaker. In other words, learning interrogatives involves more than understanding the structures but also entails knowledge of the role of interrogation in a particular society.

As mentioned in the introduction, an important aspect of understanding the usage of French interrogatives is tied to the mode of language involved. Some of the frequency results and observations from early studies on interrogatives did not make the distinction between modes of language nor among communicative contexts. The 1990's produced studies with increased awareness of the role of context in interpreting and explaining interrogatives.

O'Connor DiVito's (1997) study was mentioned in the first chapter as her work challenged traditional views on the spoken-written distinction. Her corpus included vast and varied examples of both spoken and written language. The spoken corpus included academic conferences, news conferences, televised interviews and conversations. The written corpus included literary French from 3 recent centuries, folklore and fairytales, detective novels, travel guides, official correspondence and magazines. The quantitative analysis consisted of frequency reports and variable rule analyses. For each grammatical feature, linguistic and discourse factors are proposed as reasons for speaker choice. As far as interrogatives are concerned, she found that "the patterns demonstrated ...indicate that certain linguistic and discourse factors contribute to native-speaker choice of interrogative syntax both when speaking and when writing. They also prove that these factors cut across traditional spoken-written distinctions" (p. 95). The linguistic and discourse factors include subject type, and discourse type (rhetorical or not) and the amount of interaction. She also found that types of questions are linked with particular genres (for instance, *pourquoi* questions are found in detective novels).

The last 15 years have seen a continued interest in French interrogatives. The literature has recently been divisible according to the scope of the investigation. On the one hand, there have been studies examining the use of a single structure or aspect of interrogative structures, presented in Section 2.3. On the other hand, there have

continued to be large-scale analyses of the interrogative system as a whole notably by Coveney and later Quillard whose studies are particularly relevant to this dissertation.

Coveney (1989, 1990, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2002) has written a series of articles on the topic of variation in Spoken French with special emphasis on both negation and interrogatives. Coveney's (2002; originally published in 1996) seminal contribution to the sociolinguistic discussion of interrogative structures in spoken French examined the structures from a variationist perspective. His approach was distinct from previous studies on interrogative structures since he focused on the acceptability and equivalence of variant structures. The research question was as follows "To what extent can we account for the choices made by speakers in ...interrogative sentences?" (p. 1). His large pursuit was to inspect interrogative structures as a grammatical variable. His data were comprised of recorded, one-on-one, informal interviews that Coveney had with native speakers who were working at several camps in Picardie. His corpus contains 122 WH-interrogatives. In contrast to previous studies, he was very concerned with the problems of acceptability and equivalence of these structures. He dedicates an entire chapter to the taxonomy of communicative functions for interrogatives. These functions include three kinds of features: features concerning the relationship between the speaker, utterance and addressee, features concerning the author's knowledge, beliefs and assumptions and features concerning propositional content. With these features, he is able to account for nearly every interrogative in his corpus. In the next chapter, Coveney examines the factors that influence the choice of structure. He carefully evaluates categorical linguistic and pragmatic constraints. Then, each variant is described according to its usage.

Coveney (1989) using the same corpus as from his book, sought "to what extent is the variation in structures conditioned by function". He coded each interrogative for illocutionary force. He had three categories of communicative function: 1) the speaker

expects the hearer to respond, 2) the speaker expects him/herself to respond, 3) there is no response expected. He coded both yes-no questions and WH-questions.

Coveney (1990) looks at his Picardy data with the goal of applying variationist methodology to a quantitative study of interrogatives. In contrast to previous studies which assume “weak complementarity” of variants, he confronts two major issues in variation studies: 1) the acceptability problem, 2) the equivalence problem. For interrogatives to be truly equivalent, they must share both propositional meaning and illocutionary force. This two-fold nature of interrogatives makes them particularly difficult to analyze in terms of equivalent variants. In a similarly themed article (1997), Coveney outlines the tests for structural equivalencies that include self-correction, correction of others and repetition tests as well as the criteria for a grammatical variable according to which interrogative structures qualify.

Coveney (1995) takes a more focused look at the *in situ* structure in spoken French. He examines the pragmatic and contextual factors influencing the choice of the *in situ* structure in contrast with a fronted structure as seen in the York Child Language Survey. He compared the usage of the two types of structures according to differences of communicative function, the length of the question expression, informativeness of the non-Q elements and planning. These factors and his findings are examined in more depth in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Coveney’s work has set the standard for French interrogative studies and it has inspired the direction of this dissertation. His hypotheses and observations are analyzed in a systematic way with significant theoretical backing.

Quillard (2001), with Coveney’s contributions as a starting point, examined both yes-no and consitutent interrogatives in spoken French from a syntactic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic perspective. She based her study on a corpus comprised of seven contexts

that differed according to social milieu, age, formality and education. Her corpus provided 1915 interrogatives on which to base her analysis. She found 16 different types of WH-questions but focused on the 5 most frequent structures: [SVQ], [QSV], [QESV], [QV SN] and [QV-CL]. Her analysis looked at syntactic patterns, communicative functions, and distribution of forms according to social contexts. Quillard's conclusions serve as important points of comparison for the findings of this dissertation.

2.3 WH-INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURES: SPECIFIC CLAIMS

An important focus for many studies on French interrogatives is the form and function relationship for each individual structure. In the sub-sections that follow, noteworthy findings for significant structures are presented.

2.3.1 pro V Q: *in situ* interrogative

There has been widespread interest in the *in situ* interrogative form. This form is also referred to as SVQ in the literature. Several of these papers have followed a formal approach within the minimalist framework (Chang, Boeckx, Mathieu). I begin however with studies analyzing this structure in terms of broader pragmatic and syntactic perspectives.

The *in situ* structure according to Coveney is “perhaps the most puzzling interrogative structure in contemporary French” (2002, p. 218). Take also into account Weinrich's (1989) vague reference to the *in situ* form as being a more relaxed variant than fronted constructions, but a belief that it may also carry a particular emphasis. Despite being overlooked by several studies introduced in Section 2.2, proV Q is not an insignificant colloquial structure.

Coveney (1995, p. 146) provides a table allowing us to see the use of the *in situ* (SVQ according to him) within various studies and contexts. His table displaying relative frequency of *in situ* structures in previous studies is adapted in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1

Variety (researcher)	% SVQ	N=
Paris middle-class (Ashby)	38.8	85
Middle-class colloquial (Behnstedt)	33	446
Middle-class formal (Behnstedt)	25	4,367
Quebec adolescents (Fox)	24.5	805
Somme middle-and working-classes (Coveney)	15.6	122
Belgian TV journalists (Lafontaine and Lardinois)	14.9	230
Montreal children/adolescents (Lefebvre)	13	433
Nine-year-olds (Söll)	12.9	364
Working-class (Behnstedt)	12	587
Middle-class (Pohl)	10.3	155
Working-class (Pohl)	8.7	69
Elderly Belgian couple (Pohl)	2	184

According to Coveney (2002) there is evidence that the proV Q structure is on the rise (p. 284). This structure has recently captured the attention of linguists interested in French and other languages. Next is a discussion of several analyses.

A frequent stereotype of the *in situ* structure is that it is used exclusively for echo questions as in, “I found a dinosaur egg”. “You found a WHAT?” Even in English, this structure also has other pragmatic functions. Bolinger (1978) gives this counter-example (his 260): “They’re planning on buying a new house”.- “And they’re going to pay for it with what, love and hope?” Oprah when repeating interactions that occurred during a commercial break utters: “you wanted to say what” with falling intonation. In this context, she is already knows the answer and uses this question as a leading statement.

True echo questions are in fact infrequent in interaction. Nevertheless, the relationship between the *in situ* structure and echo questions is an important one. An

echo question is by its nature highly answerable. The speaker knows that the listener knows the answer. Indeed Quillard (2000) associates the use of proV Q with echo questions – questions syntactically mirror the assertion. This type of question allows the expression of surprise and astonishment. Quillard attributes the high frequency of this structure to its utility for accentuating the question word, its ease of production as well as the expression of surprise.

Many researchers focus on the restrictions placed upon the use of the proV Q structure in French. Coveney (1989) states that this structure, when compared to other WH interrogatives, is subject to the strongest discursual constraints. He found that with proV Q, the interrogatives tend to be short, the verbs have low informational value and the SV component is presupposed. Finally, he notes that rhetorical questions are not possible in this structure. He hypothesizes that this may be due to the fact that the question word is in focus position in this structure but a rhetorical question is not looking for an answer.

Quillard (2000) claims that the proV Q structure is used for phatic introductory questions as in her example (717):

elle me l'a remboursé en deux fois et la deuxième fois elle est venue me rapporter l'argent et j'ai senti que je ne la reverrais plus jamais~ elle est restée quoi? cinq minutes

She states that this type of question is used to keep the listener's attention. This type of interrogative is often found with the question expression *quoi*, according to Quillard because it is a good recipient of the phrasal accent. She acknowledges that this proposed use of the proV Q structure is contradictory with the categorical constraint against rhetorical questions as proposed by Coveney.

Quillard also evaluates the proV Q structure in light of requests for explanation. She found that many of the requests for clarification expressed by proV Q were questions on a precise element of the discourse. In fact, more than half of all requests for clarification in her corpus were proV Q interrogatives. She attributes this to the fact that the interrogative expression represents the element to be clarified; placing it at the end of the utterance allows it to be accentuated thereby targeting the request.

Chang (1997) with her thesis on WH-*in situ* in French began a trend of papers focused on the role of this emergent and important structure in spoken French. Her overriding claims involve the idea that WH- *in situ* involves one type of reading and movement structures involve another. These differences result from the fact that the *in situ* structure is appropriate in a strongly presupposed context where the speaker is asking for details on the established topic. She is the first to point out the much debated and discussed observation that the answer to an *in situ* interrogative cannot be “nothing” as in the example “*Marie a acheté quoi? *Rien.*”

Indeed, the role of the answer is important for this structure. Coveney (2002) points out that proV Q is used when the speaker is asking a question to which he/she wants an answer. Obenauer (1994) states that proV Q is for contexts where the answer is regarded as ‘important’. Boeckx (1999) explores Chang’s (1997) observation that proV Q questions like *Jean a acheté quoi?* cannot felicitously receive the answer *rien* unlike its fronted counterpart. In particular, he looks at how focus may explain the difference in felicitous answer possibilities between fronted and *in situ* interrogatives in French. He claims that *in situ* interrogatives are focused, ‘covert’ clefts, which explains why they cannot accept “nothing” as an answer. He believes that the properties of *in situ* interrogatives are “the result of the confluence of syntactic, semantic and phonological (prosodic) factors” (p. 71). Mathieu (2004) rejects several of the claims made by Chang

(1997) in that he believes that “nothing” is an acceptable answer to an *in situ* question in some circumstances, thus the *in situ* structure is not necessarily presuppositional. Further, he proposes that the *in situ* structure is associated with a non-specific meaning whereas the raising structure has a specific meaning.

An important aspect of the proV Q analysis lies in the role of presupposition. Bolinger (1978, p 131) hypothesized that the WH-final structure in English presupposes more than the WH in initial position. Coveney (2002, p 223) claims that Bolinger’s interpretation seems equally valid for the corresponding structure in French. Coveney (2002, p. 223) states that for proV Q, the SVC portion of the interrogative is more strongly presupposed than for the fronted counterparts. Boeckx (1999) is especially interested in why a focused WH-expression appears *in situ* and in turn why there is a ban on embedded *in situ* interrogatives. He claims the “preposed wh-phrases are often said to be inherently focused, but they do not carry the presupposition of their *in situ* counterparts” (p. 74). Thus the difference between the two types of interrogatives can be explained by the aforementioned close relationship between the *in situ* structure and clefts. Boeckx et al (2001) continue this examination with the claim that there is no optionality of movement in French. They base this claim on the fact that there are interpretive differences between *in situ* and fronted interrogatives. More specifically, there is a presupposition associated with the *in situ* structure.

There are many potentially relevant cross-linguistic pragmatic correlates to the French proV Q. In Japanese, Shimotani & Wang (2006) look at the distribution of the question marker *ka*. It has been observed that this question marker is not obligatory in all contexts. They claim that this is not due to speech styles alone. In a study of a formal speech style in a conversational setting they found 29 *zero*-marked questions in contrast to 62 *ka*-marked questions. According to their findings, *ka*-marked questions are

information seeking and usually occur at discourse initial position. In contrast, *zero*-marked questions are “confirmatory” where the speaker confirms assumptions of shared knowledge. The differences between Japanese *ka*-marked and zero-marked questions are strikingly similar to differences seen between fronted and *in situ* interrogatives in Spoken French. In this dissertation, the *in situ* interrogative construction is analyzed as a version of a zero-marked interrogative since the only interrogative feature is the question word itself.

2.3.2 Q proV

This particular structure has a strong colloquial sound to it according to many grammarians. Coveney labeled this structure as non-standard and claims that it is “affected by few variable linguistic or pragmatic constraints of significance” (2002, p. 227). He found a strong tendency for this structure to be used when the question word was *comment*. He believed this is due to the formulaicity of utterances such as: *comment X s’appelle? comment on appelle X?* etc. He also found a near categorical constraint against using *quand* in this structure. Coveney (1989) also claims that this structure is used less when an answer is expected such that the communicative intent is an important factor in the choice of this structure.

Quillard (2000) found the Q proV to be used frequently with the question expressions *pourquoi* and *comment*. She interprets this frequency as a result of the lack of compatibility of these question expressions with the proV Q structure. In other words, she views the Q proV structure as the fall-back structure for proV Q. It allows for the S-V word order, but doesn’t have the pragmatic restrictions of proV Q. She found a strong tie between Q proV and requests for explanation, but dismisses any pragmatic reason for this link. Instead, she believes that the link is due to the fact that most requests for

explanation involve the question expression *comment*. Most of these interrogatives are questioning an attribute of the subject especially involving the verb *appeler*. She explains this connection by analogy with the question *comment ça va?* According to Quillard, there is also a strong tie between Q proV and rhetorical questions. Her most important conclusion on this structure is that it has no pragmatic motivations, instead it can be explained by either syntactic preferences or as the logical other choice in lieu of proV Q. Most importantly, and contrary to the opinions of many grammarians, she found in her sociolinguistic study that Q proV is sociolinguistically neutral.

2.3.3 Pronoun inversion: Q Vpro

Pronoun inversion was long taken to be the primordial interrogative structure. In current spoken language use, inversion carries significant interactional weight. Weinrich (1989) states that pronoun inversion is very rare in spoken language unless there is a particular stylistic pretention in order. He postulates that with inversion “on peut montrer une certaine distance à son interlocuteur aussi bien pour lui manifester son respect que pour lui imposer le respect” (p. 535). Dewaele (1999) found that inversion is used to introduce a new topic or a new theme within a topic.

Quillard (2000) suggests that inversion is used to put distance between the speaker and his/her question such as in instances of irony. She analyzes several tokens as lacking spontaneity. She also hypothesizes that inversion is used when the speaker has an idea of the answer. Quillard (2003) in a second look at her dissertation data contemplates inversion structures in two types of contexts- one she labels as rather *familier* and the other as rather formal. She concludes that in the formal contexts, inversion is neutral. By contrast, in the colloquial contexts, inversion is used for stereotypical requests, such as requests and fixed rhetorical questions (*‘que veux-tu?’*), etc.

2.3.4 Q esq proV

Gougenheim et al (1964) found that this structure is more frequent when the question expression is monosyllabic. According to Wandruszka (1970) *est-ce que* in yes-no questions is used to give the speaker time to think, to give more force to the question and to give more insistence to the interrogative. This observation has implications for the use of Q esq pro V in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. Obenauer (1981) calls interrogatives with *est-ce que* “complex interrogatives”. He notes that this type of interrogative represents an idiosyncratic aspect of French that is not found in other similar languages. He believes that *est-ce que* is analyzable and is not a particle. In investigating the relationship between complex interrogatives and clefts, he concludes that the former do not have the *mise en relief* associated with clefts.

Weinrich (1989) claims that structures with *est-ce que* are classified as stylistically neutral. Coveney (1989) found that this structure was used with quoted language and may be connected with politeness. It is important to note that unlike this dissertation, he included *qu'est-ce que* in this category. Coveney (1996) found that this structure was used freely for all communicative functions. Additionally, in informal speech, speakers may tend to avoid this structure due to its redundancy.

Quillard (2000) looks at the usage of this structure in two contexts: when Q is *que* and when Q is not *que*. She found that the usage is different. When Q is not *que*, Q esq proV is used as a reinforcer tied to the emphatic quality of the interrogative morpheme *est-ce que*. However, when Q is *que*, the question has a more general sense especially when compared to proV Q.

2.3.5 Interrogative clefts

Clefts are an important structural category in spoken language in general and in spoken French in particular.. Lambrecht (2001) defines a cleft construction as follows:

A Cleft Construction (CC) is a complex sentence structure consisting of a matrix clause headed by a copula and a relative or relative-like clause (RC) whose relativized argument is coindexed with the predicative argument of the copula. Taken together, the matrix and the relative express a logically simple proposition, which can also be expressed in the form of a single clause without a change in truth conditions.

In the case of interrogatives, cleft usage is limited to a particular type: *c'est*-clefts.

A *c'est*-cleft contains two important parts: 1) the main clause consisting of *c'est* and an argument and 2) the relative clause. In the case of the main clause, there are many possibilities for the grammatical category of the argument (Katz, 1997). A question expression is just one of such grammatical categories. In the case of clefted interrogatives, the question expression may either precede or follow *c'est* (in COMP or *in situ* respectively). In the relative clause, there is a relative or relative-like expression followed by a predicator with a missing complement. Katz (pgs 151-155) debates the grammatical functions, specifically whether they are relative pronouns or complementizers, of the two relative-like expressions. She concludes that *que* is a complementizer (or an empty object marker) and that *qui* is a relative pronoun (thereby coreferential with the extracted argument).

Despite the apparent frequency of usage in spoken language, interrogative clefts have been frequently overlooked in the literature on French WH-questions. This may be due in part to their low stylistic evaluation and strong association with spoken rather than written code.

2.3.6 Q que pro V

The Q que proV is a structure that consistently has the lowest socio-stylistic evaluations. Quillard (2000) discusses two potential hypotheses explaining the Q que proV structure: either it serves as a reinforcer of the Q proV structure or it is a reduction of *est-ce que* in a Q est-ce que proV structure. She had very few tokens of this type in

her corpus. She found its usage to be very dependent on the context of utterance. In addition, she believes that this structure is always produced when speakers are not monitoring their speech.

2.3.7 Questions about subjects

Next are questions distinguished by the fact that they are asking about the subject of the sentence, whether animate or inanimate. Several authors have pointed out that questions on people are much more infrequent than questions on things (see Gougenheim 1964). Further, typically in French, as in many other languages, the focus (*qui*) avoids Subject position.

Borillo (1978) explains the difference between *qui* and *qui c'est qui* as the latter having more emphasis. Coveney (2002) hypothesized that the *QuiV* structure is preferred over the *Qui esqui V* structure in certain communicative functions such as sub-topic-introducing questions or emphatic assertions (rhetorical questions). Quillard (2000) provides several insightful comments on questions on subjects. For example, she discusses reasons why the structures *c'est qui qui* and *qui c'est qui* are viewed as emphatic. Nevertheless, she saw a contextual difference between *qui* (more formal) on the one hand and *c'est qui qui* and *qui c'est qui* structures (less formal) on the other. She also hypothesizes a deictic quality of *qui* alone. In addition, she claims that the use of any of the questions about subjects containing *est-ce que* may permit interruptions by the interlocutor.

Katz (1997) found that the interrogative expression *qui* was a very frequent QU-word in cleft structures. In the corpora she studied, there was a clear preference for the *qui c'est qui* structure instead of *c'est qui qui*. She cites the following examples of *qui c'est qui*: (Katz's 55-58 p. 142)

Qui c'est qui écoute Brassens? (Giacomi)
Alors qui c'est qui va les élever les petits? (Giacomi)
Qui c'est qui avait fait ça? (Bonnefoy-Mousset)
Qui c'est qui va imiter le chien? (Bonnefoy-Mousset)

Note that in a *qui*-cleft, the clefted *qui* is not a subject.

2.3.8 Questions about direct objects

Quillard (2000) found that when *quoi* was used in proV Q, for 11 out of 55 cases, the proV Q question was followed by a yes-no question. She believes that the use of *quoi* indicates that the speaker may already have an idea of what the answer may be. Quillard also looked at the type of answers found when comparing *qu'est-ce que* to *quoi*. With *quoi* she found nominal answers whereas with *qu'est-ce que* she found more phrasal answers. In her view, *qu'est-ce que* has an argumentative dimension. She also believes that *quoi* demands precision whereas *qu'est-ce que* is much more general.

Blanche-Benveniste (1997) hypothesized that the difference between *qu'est-ce que c'est N* and *c'est quoi N* is syntactic/semantic. On the one hand, *qu'est-ce que c'est N* is generic and usually used with an indefinite article. It is a request for a general definition and is synonymous with *qu'est-ce que cela veut dire?* or *qu'est-ce que vous voulez dire?* On the other hand, *c'est quoi N* is specific and usually used with a definite article in order to elucidate a term that has been specified in the context of the discourse. She summarizes these tendencies with these equivalents: *qu'est-ce que c'est, comme sorte de chose?* versus *c'est quoi, cette chose?*

2.3.9 Register evaluation of interrogative structures

As demonstrated by the commentary by grammarians presented in Section 2.1, interrogative structures are strongly associated with register. Examine the commonly

agreed upon socio-stylistic evaluations of several WH interrogatives in the Table 2.2 adapted from Coveney 2002 (p. 98).

Table 2.2

SOCIO-STYLISTIC EVALUATION	QUESTION VARIANT
careful style, writing	(QV-pro)
neutral (sometimes ' <i>inelegant</i> ' in writing)	(Q esq proV)
colloquial (' <i>familier</i> ') but generally accepted as standard in speech	(proV Q)
colloquial/working class (' <i>populaire</i> '), incorrect	(Q proV), (c'est Q que proV)
uneducated (' <i>vulgaire</i> '), incorrect	(Q que proV) (Q c'est que proV) (Q esq c'est que proV)

This presentation of information in Table 2.2 conflates register and dialect- two very different concepts. The former assumes the form is available to a speaker when she speaks in a certain register, the latter assumes the form is just not in a particular person's dialect or grammar.

Armstrong (2001) in his work on social and stylistic variation in Spoken French claims that WH-interrogatives represent "an area of French syntax that is undoubtedly socially and stylistically diagnostic" (p. 134). He provides a continuum of WH-interrogatives in descending order of socio-stylistic value:

Quand venez-vous? [QV-CL]
Quand est-ce que vous venez? [QESV]
Vous venez quand? [SVQ]
Quand vous venez? [QSV]
Quand que vous venez? [QkSV]
Quand c'est que vous venez? [QsekSV]
Quand que c'est que vous venez? [QksekSV]

In looking at both the results from Behnstedt (1973) and Coveney (2002), Armstrong promotes the ideas of a WH-core and periphery. According to his observations, the core includes QV NP, QESV, SVQ and QSV. All speakers use the core area of this variable syntax but the periphery (which he labels high-value and low-value) may be distributed in different proportions. In his conclusion on the section on grammatical variation, he states that “speakers can actively cultivate variability in grammar if it is one of the chief linguistic resources they have at their disposal to express their social identity...” (p. 142).

Ball (2000) categorizes interrogative structures according to degree of formality:

Où vas-tu?
Où est-ce que tu vas?
Où c'est que tu vas?
C'est où que tu vas?
Où est-ce que c'est que tu vas?
Où ça que tu vas?
Tu vas où?
Où tu vas?
Où que tu vas?

Within this categorization, the middle five structures are only differentiated by degree of emphasis on the WH word. For example, the structure *c'est où que tu vas?* puts a high degree of emphasis on the WH word. The most colloquial of the expressions is *Où que tu vas?* He also points out that *Où tu vas* is much more colloquial than *tu vas où?*

Batchelor and Offord (2000) divide register (defined as degree of formality or informality accorded by the speaker to the listener) as a continuum with three sections: R1, R2 and R3. R1 is very informal, casual and colloquial. R2 is standard, polite and educated. R3 is formal, literary and official. They look at the variations due to register throughout French pronunciation and grammar. According to their evaluations, Q V pro

represents the R2,R3 level. Any form with *est-ce que* falls in the R2 level. Interrogatives from R1 include: proV Q, Q proV, and Q c'est que proV.

2.3.10 Frequency in Previous Studies

Within many of the studies on French interrogatives discussed in this chapter, a major focus has been frequency and distribution of structures. On the surface, it is difficult to compare the results of the individual studies in a meaningful way. In order to accomplish just that task, Coveney (2002, p. 112) created the chart reproduced in Table 2.3. Note that regardless of the total number (N) of structures analyzed in each study, the numbers for each row of structures add up to 100. The “-“ symbol indicates that there was no information on this particular structure in the study whereas “0” represents the finding that there were no tokens of the structure under discussion.

Table 2.3

Variety/ researcher	SVQ	QSV	QkSV	QksekSV	QsekSV	seQkSV	QESV	QV -CL	QV NP	N=
Formal Middle-class (Behnstedt)	25	10	0	0	0	-	3	50	12	4,367
Plays (Terry)	12.5			-	-	-	38.9	48.6		1.515
Belgian TV journalists (Lafontaine & Lardinois)	14.9	5.3	0	-	-	-	35.5	44.3		230
Middle-class (Ashby)	38.8	7.1	0	0	0	0	38.8	13	2.4	85
Middle-class (Pohl)	10.3	7.7	-	-	-	-	46.5	35.5		155
Colloquial middle class (Behnstedt)	33	46	0	0	4	-	12	3	2	446
Elderly Belgian couple (Pohl)	2	3	-	-	-	-	66	28	.5	184
Working- class (Pohl)	8.7	27.5	-	-	-	-	53.6	10.2		69
Working- class (Behnstedt)	12	36	26	6	3	-	8	9		587
Belgian 7-12 year-olds (Lafontaine & Lardinois)	22	11	9	-	-	-	18	40		?
Montreal 8- 18 year-olds (Lefebvre)	-	87.5	-	-	-	-	-	12.5		72
9 year-olds (Söll)	12.9	31.6	6.9	0	3.3	.3	41.5	3.6		364

From the studies seen in Table 2.3, it is clear that the distribution of interrogative structures is not consistent. Groups of speakers tend to favor 1) proV Q, 2) Q proV, 3) Q esque proV, or 4) inversion (clitic inversion or a combined category). In most studies there is a single or pair of structures that are distinctly favored. In no case do the speakers favor a clefted structure. However, as the dashes indicate, there have been

relatively few studies that even take into account the clefted interrogative. The bias of the researchers is also apparent in the categories under scrutiny. Terry for example combined the first three categories into one big category that he labeled incomplete transformations. It is relevant to point out that the frequency of a particular structure is not necessarily tied to the social class of the speakers since similar social classes produce different results with different researchers.

Quillard's (2000) WH-interrogative frequencies were not included in Coveney's table. Her findings are summarized in Table 2.4. Her notation is consistent with Coveney's but she takes into account more categories. For instance, her *structures à présentatif* include structures other than *c'est Q*, *QE c'est* (*Qu'est-ce que c'est*) and *Q c'est*.

Table 2.4 (adapted from Quillard's Table 6 p. 97)

QV SN	QV CL	QESV	SVQ	QSV	c'est Q	QE c'est	Q=SV	structures à présentatif	Total
65	35	137	219	108	60	13	18	15	670
10%	5%	20%	33%	16%	9%	2%	3%	2%	100%

For the most part, her distribution of frequencies is consistent with previous studies as presented by Coveney in Table 2.3. The relatively high frequency of the structure QV SN is somewhat surprising but is mostly accounted for by interrogatives with the question expression *quel* inquiring about an attribute. In contrast with previous studies and the current study, she separates SVQ from c'est Q. If weighed together, the *in situ* structure is by far the most common.

2.4 CONCLUSION

As can be seen from this survey of the literature on French interrogatives, the focus, perspective, goals and findings of each study are as varied as the interrogative structures themselves. Thus, although there has been much said to this point about interrogatives in French, there remains much to explore. Importantly, I aim to improve on the shortcomings of the studies seen above. One of the shortcomings of broad-scoped studies has been the lack of concrete explanations for choice in interrogatives. In contrast the specific studies have often been theory driven rather than in pursuit of clarifying the interrogative puzzle. One goal of this dissertation is to unify and refine much of what has been reported in previous studies.

Chapter 3: French WH-Interrogative Inventory and Syntax

“Interrogative constructions have played a central role in the development of modern syntactic theory. Characterizing the constraints on the ‘dislocation’ of *wh*-phrases in interrogatives, for example, has been at the heart of work in generative grammar since the mid 1960s”(Ginzburg & Sag 2000, p. 1).

As the citation from Ginzburg and Sag states, interrogatives interest syntacticians since they provide challenges for generative theories. With respect to interrogatives, languages are often divided into three categories: 1) languages with movement 2) languages with optional movement and 3) languages without movement. French is often placed in the second category. The syntactic description of French in this chapter is based on the very fact that French has two major positions for the WH-element.

The movement analysis proposed in the literature for interrogative phrases involves a WH-word moving to COMP position, thereby leaving a trace in its previous position. The grammatical description in this dissertation assumes a framework of syntax which does not involve movement. In particular, this description is inspired by Construction Grammar but includes no technical detail of the model. This chapter is dedicated to a syntactic description and categorization of WH-questions in Spoken French. Importantly, the goal of this chapter is not an analysis of the structure or syntax of French interrogatives *per se*. Rather, it seeks to establish an ordered way of presenting and comparing the structures as a means to discuss how they get used in speech. Section 3.1 outlines this particular organization and description of interrogatives that relies on a tri-partite division of structures based on the relationship of the WH-expression with the rest of the sentence. Such an organizational approach distinguishes itself from presentations that are based on highlighting the grammatical role of the interrogative

expression. Section 3.2 supports several important syntactic claims made in the first section especially regarding WH-expression and question categorization.

3.1 WH-Interrogative Categorization

As mentioned in the introduction, WH-Interrogatives by definition must contain a WH-expression (also referred to as question expression). In the description that follows, **Q** represents the question expression variable. Question expressions in French belong to a closed class but do not all belong to the same syntactic category. Table 3.1 illustrates the three kinds of question expressions with an example below each type: Q can be an XP, a determiner, or the clitic *que*.

Table 3.1

Categories of Q		
Q= <i>que</i>	Q= DET (<i>quel/quelle</i>)	Q=XP
<i>Que veux-tu?</i>	<i>Quel biscuit veux-tu?</i>	<i>Où veux-tu aller?</i>

Note that the category Q=*que* is unique in that it contains a single member, *que*, which is the only clitic among the question expressions. The interrogative determiner set (*quel, quelle, quels, quelles*) agrees in gender and number with the noun it determines; this set is normally used to inquire about the identity of a member of a set. The category of Q as an XP has an important sub-division where on the one hand XP is an adverb and the other where XP is a pronoun. This is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Q=XP	
XP=ADV <i>où</i> <i>quand</i> <i>comment</i> <i>combien</i> <i>pourquoi</i>	XP=PRO <i>qui</i> <i>lequel/laquelle</i> <i>quoi</i> <i>quesque</i> <i>quesqui</i> <i>quiesqui</i>

The category PRO contains the pronouns *quesque*, *quesqui* and *quiesqui*, which represent the written forms *qu'est-ce que*, *qu'est-ce qui*, and *qui est-ce qui* respectively. I propose that these structures, traditionally analyzed as sequences of words: Q=*que/i* + *est-ce que/qui*, are actually single words. The argument for this claim is expanded in Section 3.2. These particular pronouns behave differently from the other members of the PRO category since they are not NPs. For example they are not found as the object of a preposition, i.e. **avec quesque* in contrast with *avec quoi*. This inconsistency is attributable to the fact that historically the forms with *est-ce que* were clefts.

The interrogative adverbs refer to a specific type of unknown information in a WH-question. Table 3.3 reviews the adverbs with their English equivalents and the type of adverb in question.

Table 3.3

Adverb	English equivalent	Type
<i>Où</i>	where	place/direction/goal
<i>Quand</i>	when	time
<i>comment</i>	how (what)	manner/quality
<i>combien</i>	how much/how many	amount
<i>pourquoi</i>	why	cause

The above table is not exhaustive since additional adverbial questions may be asked by combining a preposition, a form of *quel* and a NP i.e. *A quelle heure est-ce que tu es parti?*

The adverbs in Table 3.3 are not syntactically restricted as are several pronominal question expressions in French. There is a well-documented asymmetry in French interrogative expressions involving *que/quoi/quesque*:

Table 3.4

a) <i>Que fais-tu?</i>	b) <i>Tu fais quoi?</i>
a') * <i>Quoi fais-tu?</i>	b') * <i>Tu fais que?</i>
a'') * <i>Qu'est-ce que fais-tu?</i>	b'') * <i>Tu fais qu'est-ce que?</i>
c) * <i>Que tu fais?</i>	d) * <i>Que?</i>
c') ? <i>Quoi (que) tu fais?</i>	d') <i>Quoi?</i>
c'') <i>Qu'est-ce que tu fais?</i>	d'') * <i>Qu'est-ce que?</i>

As a clitic, *que* occurs only before a verb i.e. in interrogative inversion structures (a). The pronoun *quoi* may occur *in situ* and alone (b and d). The pronoun *quesque* may only occur sentence initially with a canonical word order (c).

There are also several structures involving Q=PRO where the structure is only possible with a particular lexical item (See *Qui V* in Section 3.1.1). In such cases, the lexical item is used instead of Q. In the descriptions that follow, **V** refers to a verb, whether lexical or copular, plus any (potential) non-subject complements. **Pro** refers to a clitic pronoun and **N** to a Noun Phrase.

There are many ways to organize or view the interrogative system in spoken French. One accepted system organizes interrogatives according to the syntactic role of the question expression: whether a subject, an object or an adjunct. In contrast, this dissertation looks at interrogatives from a purely structural perspective, i.e. where the question word is located in the sentence especially in relation to the verb.

The categorization that follows only includes interrogatives with pronoun subjects. Interrogatives with NP subjects are excluded from this outline due to their extreme overall infrequency. Note that a good number of NPs are found in Spoken French in inversion structures like in Example 3.1:

Example 3.1

Où va Jean?

Nevertheless, neither stylistic inversion as exemplified above nor complex inversion are taken into account in this dissertation.

The major syntactic division for WH-questions is threefold: 1) Q in COMP, 2) Q *in situ*, 3) Q alone. This categorization is based upon the placement of the Q in the interrogative (1 versus 2) and presence or absence of a VP (1 and 2 vs. 3).

Table 3.5

WH-QUESTIONS		
Q in COMP	Q <i>in situ</i>	Q alone

In this chapter only unattested examples are used, for purposes of clarity and consistency. Table 3.6 provides a preview of the structures with an example of the categories discussed in this section.

Table 3.6 French WH-Interrogative Structures

Syntactic Organization		Structure	Example
Q in COMP	Simplex	Q V _{pro}	<i>Où vas-tu?</i>
		Q proV	<i>Où tu vas?</i>
	Esq	Quiesqui V	<i>Qui est-ce qui va au parc?</i>
		Quesqui V	<i>Qu'est-ce qui se passe?</i>
		Q esque proV	<i>Où est-ce que tu vas?</i>
		Qesque proV	<i>Qu'est-ce que tu vois?</i>
		Qesque c'est que X	<i>Qu'est-ce que c'est que la linguistique?</i>
	Clefts	Qui c'est qui V	<i>Qui c'est qui va au parc?</i>
		Q c'est que proV	<i>Où c'est que tu vas?</i>
		Q c'est que c'est que pro V	<i>Où c'est que c'est que tu vas?</i>
		Q esque c'est que proV Qesque c'est que pro V	<i>Où est-ce que c'est que tu vas?</i>
		Qui Qui V	<i>Qui qui va au parc?</i>
		Q que pro V	<i>Où que tu vas?</i>
Q in situ	Simplex	Qui V	<i>Qui va au parc?</i>
		Pro V Q	<i>Tu vas où?</i>
	Clefts	C'est Q que pro V	<i>C'est où que tu vas?</i>
		C'est Q qui (pro) V	<i>C'est qui qui va au parc?</i>
Q alone		Q	<i>Où?</i>
		Q ça	<i>Où ça?</i>

The structure involving a post-verbal *-ti* or *-tu* was not included in the above descriptions. Joret (1877) regards the *-ti* structure as an interrogative form of the French dialect spoken in Normandy. Pinchon (1967) exemplifies the *-ti* structure with: *Où c'est-i que tu vas?* or *Où que c'est-i que tu vas?* (p. 49). Although cited in the literature from

time to time, this particular structure does not appear to be in current use in metropolitan French. In contrast, the *-tu* structure is often found in Canadian French.

3.1.1 Q in COMP

This first major category of WH-questions is defined by the sentence-initial position of the question expression.

Table 3.5a

WH-QUESTIONS		
Q in COMP	Q <i>in situ</i>	Q alone

For the syntactic description, I assume a COMP slot where sentence initial question expressions are found as illustrated by: [(Q) [S]] where Q is the question word and S=Sentence. There are 3 types of Q in COMP as can be seen in Table 3.7:

Table 3.7

Q in COMP		
Simplex	<i>Esq</i>	Clefted

The descriptors *simplex*, *esq* and *clefted* are terms used to help distinguish and organize the considerable number of fronted interrogatives in Spoken French. There are two Simplex Q in COMP structures under evaluation in this Chapter displayed in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8

Simplex Q in COMP	
Q V _{pro}	Q _{pro} V

Table 3.9 shows the five structures with the morpheme *est-ce que*. The first two structures are subject interrogatives; the remaining three are non-subject.

Table 3.9

<i>Esq</i> Q in COMP				
Quiesqi V	Qesqui V	Q esq proV	Qesque proV	Qesque c'est que X

Table 3.10 displays the different cleft interrogatives when the question expression precedes the cleft. The last two structures are types of truncated clefts.

Table 3.10

Clefted Q in COMP					
Qui c'est qui V	Q c'est que proV	Q c'est que c'est que pro V	Q esque c'est que proV Qesque c'est que pro V	Qui Qui V	Q que pro V

For each structure discussed below, a recapitulative table is provided as a guide with the structure under scrutiny in grey.

3.1.1.1 Simplex Q in COMP

Q Vpro

Table 3.8a

Simplex Q in COMP	
Q Vpro	Q proV

Example 3.2

Où vas-tu?

The first category of Q in COMP is inversion structures represented by QVpro where the verb precedes the subject. The syntactic structure is [Q [Vpro]]. As mentioned above, the QVpro structure is the only possible case where Q could be the question expression *que*. Le Querler (1994) points out that it is impossible to post-pose both the subject and the interrogative expression. In other words **vas-tu où?* is ungrammatical.

Q proV

Table 3.8b

Simplex Q in COMP	
Q Vpro	Q proV

Example 3.3

Où tu vas?

The second category of Q in COMP is the structure Q proV with the syntactic structure: [Q [proV]]. This is a simplex structure with the only interrogative indicator being the pre-posed WH-element.

3.1.1.2 Esq Q in COMP

The second type of Q in COMP involves all structures with the question morpheme *est-ce que*. *Est-ce que* is a universal question morpheme used for both total and constituent questions. Table 3.9 is repeated below for clarity:

Table 3.9

Esq Q in COMP				
Quiesqi V	Quesqui V	Q esq proV	Qesque proV	Qesque c'est que X

Est-ce que occurs only with QU-words in COMP; it is not possible with QU-words *in situ*, unlike clefts, which are possible with both types of question word placement. Historically, for constituent questions, *est-ce que* was used periphrastically as a cleft construction. For example *où est-ce que* was literally “where is it that” in which case *que* was a relative.

Although in the past *est-ce que* was analyzable, Blanche-Benveniste (1999) argues that it must be currently looked at as a whole. I posit two types of *est-ce que*: 1) a question morpheme combined with interrogative adverbials, *qui* or preposition + *quoi* and 2) part of a complex morpheme acting as an interrogative pronoun in the case of *qu’est-ce que* represented as *quesque*.

Given that *esque* is a morpheme, I postulate another morpheme *est-ce qui* (represented as *esqui*). This statement is more problematic since *est-ce qui*, compared to *est-ce que* is more restricted in use and has no other function. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this dissertation, this postulation permits a nice parallel between the two structures.

quiesqui V

Table 3.9a

<i>Esq Q in COMP</i>				
Quiesqui V	Qesqui V	Q esq proV	Qesque proV	Qesque c’est que X

Example 3.4

Qui est-ce qui va au parc?

This structure involves another postulated pronoun: *quiesqui*. As such it is a parallel structure to *Qui V*. I posit the syntactic structure [Quiesqui[V]].

quesqui V

Table 3.9b

<i>Esq</i> Q in COMP				
Quiesqui V	Quesqui V	Q esq proV	Qesque proV	Qesque c'est que X

Example 3.5

Qu'est-ce qui se passe?

This structure involves a complex interrogative pronoun *quesqui* followed by a verb. This pronoun is subject and [-human]. There are some dialects that permit this structure to refer to [+human] referents. This pronoun is involved in the structure [*quesqui* [V]]. Similar to the pronoun *quesque*, the pronoun *quesqui* cannot be used *in situ*. There is no designated allomorph for this pronoun except for *quoi*. Note that this particular structure has no variants (i.e. it cannot be clefted etc).

The morpheme *est-ce qui* is required in this structure. Unlike its animate counterparts, there is no simple version of this structure. In other words, the variant **que se passe?* is not grammatical. This fact (discussed by Ambrose, 1983 among others) distinguishes the subject interrogatives questioning [-human] from those questioning [+human] that allow both non-reinforced and reinforced forms. I argue that the singular complex form *qu'est-ce qui* may have by analogy advanced the similar complex pronoun *qu'est-ce que*.

Q esq proV

Table 3.9c

<i>Esq</i> Q in COMP				
Quiesqui V	Qesqui V	Q esq proV	Qesque proV	Qesque c'est que X

Example 3.6

Où est-ce que tu vas?

This category of interrogatives consists of an adverbial or the question word *qui* combined with the question morpheme *est-ce que*. *Q esque proV* has the syntactic structure represented by [Q esque[proV]]. This particular representation assumes that there is a doubly filled COMP. Another potential representation would assume two COMP positions: [Q[esque[proV]]]. The question morpheme *est-ce que* does not permit inversion of the subject and verb. For example, **Où est-ce que vas-tu?* is ungrammatical. Note also that this entire question expression question word plus *est-ce que* cannot appear *in situ* **tu vas où est-ce que?* The *in situ* position only permits the question word alone.

quesque proV

Table 3.9d

<i>Esq</i> Q in COMP				
Quiesqui V	Qesqui V	Q esq proV	Qesque proV	Qesque c'est que X

Example 3.7

Qu'est-ce que tu vois?

This structure involves the postulated complex interrogative pronoun *quesque*. This pronoun is always an object and has the feature [-human]. Its distribution is

restricted: it may not occur *in situ* and may not occur in isolation. In such cases, the allomorph *quoi* is required. In fact, *quesque* is the only question word with an allomorph. *Quesque* proV has the syntactic structure [*quesque* [proV]].

quesque c'est que XP

Table 3.9e

<i>Esq</i> Q in COMP				
Quiesqui V	Quesqui V	Q esq proV	Quesque proV	Quesque c'est que X

Example 3.8

Qu'est-ce que c'est que la linguistique?

This structure involves the interrogative pronoun *quesque* followed by *c'est*, the complementizer *que* then an NP. The structure is as follows: [*quesque* [*c'est* [*que* [NP]]]]. Blanche-Benveniste (1999, p. 169) analyzes this structure in six parts. In the example, *Qu'est-ce que c'est que la grammaire?* she makes the following divisions:

Qu'/est-ce que/c'/est/que/la grammaire

1 2 3 4 5 6

These divisions are defined as follows: 1) interrogative pronoun 2) reinforcement particle 3) grammatical subject 4) verb 5) extrapositional *que* 6) lexical subject. This structure clearly represents a construction of its own used for particular kinds of requests. There is a related structure *Qu'est-ce que N* e.g. *Qu'est-ce que la linguistique?* which is not taken into account in this dissertation since it is old-fashioned and has fallen out of use.

3.1.1.3 Clefted Q in COMP

The last type of Q in COMP involves the use of a cleft (or clefts) after the Q-word. As can be seen in Table 3.10 repeated for clarity, in this section I am interested in those clefts with the question expression in COMP, whereas I will look at the *in situ* counterpart later in the presentation of structures. Table 3.10 is repeated for clarity.

Table 3.10

Clefted Q in COMP					
Qui c'est qui V	Q c'est que proV	Q c'est que c'est que pro V	Q esque c'est que proV Qesque c'est que pro V	Qui Qui V	Q que pro V

qui c'est qui V

Table 3.10a

Clefted Q in COMP					
Qui c'est qui V	Q c'est que proV	Q c'est que c'est que pro V	Q esque c'est que proV Qesque c'est que pro V	Qui Qui V	Q que pro V

Example 3.9

Qui c'est qui va au parc?

This structure's question expression is restricted to the [+human] NP interrogative: *qui*. Qui c'est qui V has the syntactic structure [qui [c'est [qui [V]]]].

Q c'est que proV

Table 3.10b

Clefted Q in COMP					
Qui c'est qui V	Q c'est que proV	Q c'est que c'est que pro V	Q esque c'est que proV Qesque c'est que pro V	Qui Qui V	Q que pro V

Example 3.10

Où c'est que tu vas?

This structure consists of a *c'est* clause with its question word in COMP followed by a relative clause. Q c'est que proV has the syntactic structure [Q [c'est [que[proV]]]]. The same syntactic restrictions exist for the allomorph *quoi* in the case of clefts in comp. Katz (1997, p 142) points out that **Quoi c'est qu'il a mangé?* is ungrammatical.

Q c'est que c'est que proV

Table 3.10c

Clefted Q in COMP					
Qui c'est qui V	Q c'est que proV	Q c'est que c'est que pro V	Q esque c'est que proV Qesque c'est que pro V	Qui Qui V	Q que pro V

Example 3.11

Où c'est que c'est que tu vas?

This structure consists of a double cleft (a case of recursion). The *in situ* counterpart to this structure is ungrammatical **c'est Q que c'est que proV*. In this structure, there are two *c'est* clauses which share an argument followed by a single

relative clause. Q *c'est que c'est que proV* has the syntactic structure $[Q[c'est[que[c'est[que[proV]]]]]]$.

Q esqu c'est que proV
quesque c'est que pro V

Table 3.10d

Clefted Q in COMP					
Qui c'est qui V	Q c'est que proV	Q c'est que c'est que pro V	Q esqu c'est que proV Qesque c'est que pro V	Qui Qui V	Q que pro V

Example 3.12

Où est-ce que c'est que tu vas?

This structure appears to be a combination of structures with a Q in COMP, the morpheme *est-ce que* and a cleft. The other possible combination of interrogatives is ungrammatical $*Q$ *c'est que esqu proV*. Q *esque c'est que proV* has the following syntactic structure: $[Q esqu[c'est[que[proV]]]]$.

qui qui V

Table 3.10e

Clefted Q in COMP					
Qui c'est qui V	Q c'est que proV	Q c'est que c'est que pro V	Q esqu c'est que proV Qesque c'est que pro V	Qui Qui V	Q que pro V

Example 3.13

Qui qui va au parc?

The syntactic structure of this structure is [Qui [qui V]]. The second *qui* is a relative pronoun not part of the question expression. This is an example of a truncated cleft.

Q que proV

Table 3.10f

Clefted Q in COMP					
Qui c'est qui V	Q c'est que proV	Q c'est que c'est que pro V	Q esque c'est que proV Qesque c'est que pro V	Qui Qui V	Q que pro V

Example 3.14

Où que tu vas?

The final category of Clefted Q in COMP, Q que proV is another truncated cleft. The syntactic structure is [Q [que][proV]].

3.1.2 Q *in situ*

Table 3.5b

WH-QUESTIONS		
Q in COMP	Q <i>in situ</i>	Q alone

The second major category of interrogative structures in Spoken French is defined by the position of the question word. In contrast to the fronting structures described above, these structures have the question word not in COMP but within the Sentence. As Table 3.11 shows, like Q in COMP structures, there are both simplex and clefted *in situ* structures but no structures with *esque*.

Table 3.11

<i>Q in situ</i>			
Simplex		Clefted	
Qui V	proV Q	c'est Q que pro V	c'est Q qui V

The presentation begins with the simplex structures.

3.1.2.1 Simplex *Q in situ*

qui V

Table 3.11a

<i>Q in situ</i>			
Simplex		Clefted	
Qui V	proV Q	c'est Q que pro V	c'est Q qui V

Example 3.15

Qui va au parc?

This analysis of the Qui V structure assumes that the pronoun *qui* is *in situ* in subject position: [qui V]. The question expression is restricted in this structure to *qui* which in this case is always the subject and always [+human]. There are no syntactic variants for the placement of *qui* for this question type. In other words, *V qui is ungrammatical.

proV Q

Table 3.11b

<i>Q in situ</i>			
Simplex		Clefted	
Qui V	proV Q	c'est Q que pro V	c'est Q qui V

Example 3.16

Tu vas où?

This structure consists of a simplex sentence: a pronoun followed by a verb followed by the question word. As mentioned above **quesque*, **quesqui* and **que* are not possible in this context. ProV Q has the syntactic structure [proV Q].

3.1.2.2 Clefted *Q in situ*

The second type of *in situ* interrogatives involves *c'est* clefts where the question expression is post-copular. In all other manners, the *c'est* clefts are consistent with the syntactic description of clefts above.

Table 3.11c

<i>Q in situ</i>			
Simplex		Clefted	
Qui V	proV Q	c'est Q que pro V	c'est Q qui V

c'est Q que proV

Table 3.11d

<i>Q in situ</i>			
Simplex		Clefted	
Qui V	proV Q	c'est Q que pro V	c'est Q qui V

Example 3.17

C'est où que tu vas?

This structure consists of a *c'est* clause with the question word *in situ* followed by a relative clause introduced by the complementizer *que*. Unlike its Q in COMP counterpart, the interrogative *c'est quoi que tu vois?* is grammatical. *C'est Q que proV* has the following syntactic structure: [c'est Q [que[proV]]].

c'est Q qui V

Table 3.11e

<i>Q in situ</i>			
Simplex		Clefted	
Qui V	proV Q	c'est Q que pro V	c'est Q qui V

Example 3.18

C'est qui qui va au parc?

This structure consists of a *c'est* clause with the question word *qui* or *quoi in situ* followed by the relative pronoun *qui* and a verb. Like its Q in COMP counterpart there are no other question expressions possible in this structure: **c'est quand qui V*. *C'est Q qui V* has the syntactic structure [c'est Q [qui [V]]].

3.1.3 Q alone

Table 3.5c

WH-QUESTIONS		
Q in COMP	<i>Q in situ</i>	Q alone

The first two major categories of interrogative structures were defined by the position of the question word in relation to the verb. This final category is distinguished by the absence of a verb. There are two types of the Q alone structure: the first a sentence involving only a question expression, the second a sentence with a question expression followed by a noun or prepositional phrase.

Table 3.12

Q alone	
Q	Q ça

This category is unique amongst all structures in that word order does not define it. Rather it is the lack of syntactic relations that is important. This category is not unique to interrogatives; well-formedness principles permit sentences without verbs. But these fragments indicate what is possible when syntactic context is absent.

Q

Table 3.12a

Q alone	
Q	Q ça

Example 3.19

Où?

This first category is the minimal interrogative structure since the question expression is the entire utterance. Q has the syntactic structure [Q]. All the adverbials are possible in this structure, however the complex pronominals are not: **quesque?* **quiesque?* **quesqui?* The determiner interrogative is also included in this category such as in Example 3.20.

Example 3.20

Quel parc?

Further, this structure is often followed by a noun phrase or a prepositional phrase such as:

Example 3.21

Comment dans le parc?

Q ça

Table 3.12b

Q alone	
Q	Q ça

Example 3.22

Où ça?

This type of interrogative is a special case consisting of a question word followed by *ça*. *Q ça* is a grammaticalized interrogative form.

3.2 THE CASE FOR COMPLEX PRONOMINALS

The presentation and analysis of several of the interrogative pronouns in Spoken French as outlined above merits further discussion. In this section, I focus on the arguments for grammaticalization of several interrogative expressions.

An important syntactic claim of this dissertation is that the question expression *qu'est-ce que* traditionally analyzed as the question word *que* plus the interrogative morpheme *est-ce que* is actually a single interrogative word found in the structure Q proV. The arguments supporting this analysis are articulated subsequently. By analogy and for the sake of elegance and simplification, the complex pronoun *quesqui* follows suit.

The first argument lies in the fact that *est-ce que* is unanalyzable. Langacker (1972) offers these restrictions on *qu'est-ce que* (or any of its type): it is restricted to the present tense and it does not tolerate negation. Observe his example (21): **Qu'était-ce qu'il voulait?* He believes that *qu'est-ce que* and other interrogative elements are frozen into fixed, “lexical” patterns but that they nevertheless remain analyzable. I take the argument a step further by calling this fixed pattern a morpheme.

A second argument involves phonological reduction. For example, Ball (2000) remarks on the orthography of colloquial French for *qu'est-ce que* as shortened (assumedly) to *qu'es-ce* written as *Kes* as in *kes tu glandes?* (p. 32). Further, in spoken language, the expression *qui est-ce qui* is often pronounced as *qu'est-ce qui*, in spite of the fact that reference to human entities normally requires the pronoun *qui*. Also relevant to the discussion is the fact that *qu'est-ce que* is often over-generalized and implemented in subordinates in Spoken French as in the unattested example *Je ne sais pas qu'est-ce que tu veux* instead of *Je ne sais pas ce que tu veux*.

Next, considering *quesque* as a single interrogative morpheme re-arranges a well-known deficient paradigm in French demonstrated in Table 3.4 above. The traditional manner of regarding this paradigm is shown in Table 3.13. In this schema, the adverbial question expression *où* is possible in the four interrogative structures but for ‘what’ there is no way to pose the question with the Q proV form.

Table 3.13

QVpro	Q proV	Q esq proV	proV Q
<i>Où vas-tu?</i>	<i>Où tu vas?</i>	<i>Où est-ce que tu vas?</i>	<i>Tu vas où?</i>
<i>Que veux-tu?</i>	* <i>Que tu veux?</i>	<i>Qu'est-ce que tu veux?</i>	<i>Tu veux quoi?</i>

If we observe frequency patterns in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, which are presented in detail in Section 4.1, the Q proV category is among the most frequent. With the deficient paradigm, it is impossible to use Q pro V to ask about a direct object referent. Additionally, the dearth of inverted interrogatives creates a system where the only way to ask about a direct object referent in COMP is with *quesque*. Further, by including *Qu'est-ce que* pro V in the Q esq pro V category, as many of my predecessors have done, this particular category appears to be highly frequent, but this perception is skewed by a vast majority of direct object referent questions.

By re-envisioning the paradigm as illustrated in Table 3.14 such that *quesque* proV is a Q pro V structure, then the data is much more evenly distributed. In other words, the paradigm is much more regular with this new analysis.

Table 3.14

QVpro	Q proV	Q esq proV	proV Q
<i>Où vas-tu?</i>	<i>Où tu vas?</i>	<i>Où est-ce que tu vas?</i>	<i>Tu vas où?</i>
<i>Que veux-tu?</i>	<i>Quesque tu veux?</i>		<i>Tu veux quoi?</i>

There are certainly arguments against *qu'est-ce que* being a single morpheme. Obenauer (1976) notes the minimal pair *Que diable est-ce que tu fais?* versus **Qu'est ce que diable tu fais?* where the first example allows for a word to be inserted within the posited construction. I however argue that the former is currently unacceptable. Also as pointed out earlier in this chapter, the pronoun *quesque* does not behave like its tonic allomorph *quoi*. For example, it cannot be the object of a preposition and cannot occur *in situ*. For this reason, *quesque* and its subject counterpart *quesqui* are labeled complex pronouns.

3.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined in an ordered fashion WH-interrogatives in Spoken French. Section 3.1 inspected interrogatives on the basis of syntactic category similarities. WH-interrogatives were shown to fall nicely into three different categories according to the position of the question expression in relation to other elements in the interrogative structure. The disadvantage of this organizational approach is the result that the clefts are not all in the same major category. Another possible way of arranging the structures would be to use the categories *simplex* versus *complex* (clefted) interrogatives as the main division rather than as sub-types. Such an approach would nicely parallel the frequency findings in the Barnes-Blyth corpus presented Section 3.1. However, the approach taken in this chapter corresponds to usage tendencies to be taken into consideration in the rest of this dissertation.

One of the challenges of interpreting and comparing previous studies in French interrogatives is the variety of notations for interrogative forms and the subsequent interpretations of what is included in each category. Coveney created a system that has been well-received and adopted in the literature. His abbreviations differ somewhat from the notation adopted in this dissertation. Table 3.15 indicates the relevant correspondences.

Table 3.15

Coveney's notation	Myers' notation
SVQ	proV Q
QSV	Q proV
QkSV	Q que proV
QksekSV	Q que c'est que proV
QsekSV	Q c'est que proV
seQkSV	c'est Q que proV
QESV	Q esq proV
QV-CL	Q Vpro

The most obvious difference is Coveney's use of the abbreviation S (for subject) whereas I have articulated the use of a pronoun, which is both more consistent with the other syntactic category notations as well as the frequency of pronouns in contrast with full nouns.

As far as I am aware, I am the first to remove the *quesque* proV structure category from the Q esq proV category. It is not possible to discern from the data presented in Table 2.3 whether or not the structure labeled as QESV in previous studies is heavily weighted with *quesque* proV utterances. I hypothesize that that is indeed the case. Unfortunately, the choice of label is hiding an important linguistic distinction. In fact, in Chapters 4 and 5, the behavior of *quesque* proV will be shown to be similar to that of Q proV structures. Note that given the discussion in this chapter, the *quesque* proV structure could arguably belong in the simplex sub-category of Q in COMP rather than an Esq sub-category.

It is important to point out that this presentation does not assume to represent a finite list of all possible structures. For example, the process of recursion permits various potentially acceptable interrogative structure variations. Additionally, this particular organization is purposefully restricted to interrogatives with pronoun subjects. Nevertheless, this syntactic presentation based on position of the WH-element is easily expandable if a more broad and encompassing apparatus is desired. In Chapter 4, it is illustrated that the position of the question expression whether in COMP or *in situ* is one of the most significant variables when discussing interrogative choice.

Chapter 4: Interrogative System: Parameters of Analysis

How do speakers pick one form over another when they share the same meaning? The answer lies in the interaction of factors from various components of grammar. This chapter presents an in-depth analysis of the factors that influence the choice of interrogative forms: semantic factors, sociolinguistic factors, illocutionary factors, information structure factors, pragmatic factors, phono-syntactic factors, and psychological factors. Importantly, these factors are not independent of one another. How they interact is a theme treated throughout Chapters 4 and 5 but especially in Chapter 6 where their interaction is illustrated in an Optimality Theory Analysis.

The parameters of interrogative analysis are presented in light of the use and frequency of WH-interrogatives in Sections I-III of the Barnes-Blyth Corpus, which are presented in Section 4.1. Because of the reliance of this dissertation on the Barnes-Blyth corpus, the most insightful comments related to parameters of analysis are on the most frequent structures. This chapter offers a more precise and nuanced account of the important components influencing interrogative choice as previously discussed by Coveney and Quillard among others. To that end, concrete and substantive linguistic concepts or theories are applied to interrogatives in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. For example, Section 4.5 on Information Structure carefully uses the theory in the context of WH-Interrogatives in French to elucidate the common but somewhat vague notion that *in situ* structures are more presupposed. In addition, in order to understand how these sometimes seemingly disparate parameters are related, useful umbrella terms such as *questionness* are proposed as in Section 4.3.4. Finally, several new concepts termed *answerability* (Section 4.6.4) and *expectedness* (Section 4.6.3) are presented as possible means for completing the puzzle of WH-Interrogative usage in Spoken French.

Nevertheless, a central message of this chapter is that no one parameter acts alone in conditioning interrogative variation.

4.1 INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE FREQUENCY IN BARNES-BLYTH CORPUS

In the first three sections of the Barnes-Blyth Corpus, there are 216 WHQ utterances involving pronoun subjects (or no subjects in the case of Q alone). Table 4.1 illustrates the distribution among the syntactic categories described in Chapter 3:

Table 4.1 Frequency by structure in Barnes-Blyth Corpus

Syntactic Organization		Structure	# in Corpus
Q in COMP	Simplex	Q Vpro	7
		Q proV	56
	Esq	Quiesqui V	3
		Qesqui V	5
		Q esque proV	3
		Qesque proV	47
		Qesque c'est que X	2
	Clefts	Qui c'est qui V	1
		Q c'est que proV	2
		Q c'est que c'est que pro V	0
		Q esque c'est que proV	0
		Qesque c'est que pro V	0
		Qui Qui V	0
	Q que pro V	0	
Q in situ	Simplex	Qui V	1
		Pro V Q	58
	Clefts	C'est Q que pro V	4
		C'est Q qui V	0
Q alone		Q	25
		Q ça	2
TOTAL			216

Notably, this particular presentation of frequency does not take into account specific question expression distribution. Such an essential breakdown according to question expression is demonstrated in Section 4.2 as well as the relevant sections of this chapter. Nevertheless, the information in Table 4.1 serves as a starting point for the ensuing discussion in this chapter. As can be seen from the above table, three structures emerged as having the most tokens: Q proV (56), proV Q (59) and *quesque* proV (47). Given the discussion in Chapter 3 that *quesque* is an interrogative pronoun, the structure *quesque* proV is in fact a sub-type of Q proV. In other words, *quesque* is a question word equal to *où*, *comment* etc in respect to the interrogative expressions in COMP position. Therefore, the 47 tokens with this question word may be counted among the Q proV category, thereby making it the most numerous category with 98 tokens.

4.2 SEMANTIC FACTORS

This section discusses the connection between the identity of question expression and the realized structure. Preferences of particular question expressions for specific interrogative structures are analyzed.

4.2.1 Identity of QU word

The distribution of question words is not even in the Barnes-Blyth Corpus as seen in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2 Question Expression Totals

Q=adverbial		Q=[-human] pronominal		Q=determiner	
<i>comment</i>	43	<i>quesque</i>	49	<i>quel (etc)</i>	18
<i>pourquoi</i>	23	<i>quoi</i>	30	Q= [+human] pronominal	
<i>où</i>	18	<i>que</i>	2	<i>qui</i>	9
<i>quand</i>	7	<i>lequel (etc)</i>	2	<i>quiesqui</i>	3
<i>combien</i>	6	<i>quesqui</i>	5		

Many interrogatives involve a question involving the notion “what” represented as *quesque*, *quoi*, or *que* (or in some cases *quel*). The question word *comment* is also very frequent. This is due in part to the large number of questions involved in asking about “naming” and “saying”. The least represented question words are *combien* and *quand*.

Many linguists have remarked on the preference of question words for particular structures. Behnstedt (1973) observed that *quand* and *combien* prefer the *in situ* structure whereas *comment* and *pourquoi* (and to a lesser extent *où*) do not. Coveney (2002) supported these observations. The Barnes-Blyth Corpus distributions are basically consistent with Behnstedt’s comments. Table 4.3 illustrates the distribution of question words in the most common structures in the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

Table 4.3 Question expression frequency among most frequent syntactic structures

	Q proV	proV Q	Q
<i>Combien</i>	2	3	0
<i>Comment</i>	29	2	5
<i>Où</i>	1	13	2
<i>Pourquoi</i>	15	0	7
<i>Quand</i>	0	4	0
<i>Que</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Quesque</i>	47	n/a	n/a
<i>Quel N</i>	4	7	7
<i>Lequel</i>	1	1	0
<i>Quoi</i>	n/a	27	3
<i>Qui</i>	3	1	1

Several important trends emerge from examining the above distribution. The question words show a rather clear preference for either Q proV or proV Q. The Q proV structure is most often realized with the questions expressions *comment*, *pourquoi* and

quesque. In contrast, the proV Q structure is most often realized with *où* or *quoi*. A very consistent result is the avoidance of the *in situ* position by the question word *pourquoi*. For the purposes of his research, Coveney (1995) takes this to be a categorical constraint although not an impossibility. Indeed there are some combinations as mentioned in Chapter 3 that are clearly ungrammatical for which there is no preference involved e.g. **tu veux quesque?*

Table 4.4 illustrates the distribution of question words in the less frequent structures in the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

Table 4.4 Question expression frequency among less frequent syntactic structures

	Q Vpro	Q esq proV	Q c'est que pro V	c'est Q que pro V
<i>Combien</i>	1	0	0	0
<i>Comment</i>	2	2	1	0
<i>Où</i>	1	0	0	1
<i>Pourquoi</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>Quand</i>	0	0	0	3
<i>Que</i>	2	n/a	0	n/a
<i>Quesque</i>	n/a	n/a	0	n/a
<i>Quel</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Lequel</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Quoi</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
<i>Qui</i>	1	0	1	0

Although the numbers for the above structures are too small to make any significant generalizations, it is interesting to note that the distribution of question expressions for the clefted interrogatives parallels their non-clefted correspondents. For example, the *in situ* cleft structure is found with the question expressions *où* and *quand* similar to the non-clefted *in situ* structure.

There are several points of divergence from Behnstedt's observations. First the question word *combien* does not robustly prefer the fronted or the *in situ* position. But the few occurrences of interrogatives with this particular question word prevent any conclusions in this study. A more interesting observation is the striking preference of the question word *où* for the *in situ* position, which was not predicted by Behnstedt.

The preference of question words for a particular interrogative syntax may have cross-linguistic correlates. Zeshan (2004) observes that in Hong Kong Sign Language, only “who” and “what” can appear in the *in situ* position.

4.2.2 Meaning and position

This section evaluates explanations for the syntactic tendencies of question words. Interestingly, phonological considerations would predict the opposite pattern than that seen above. The principle of End-Weight (see Section 4.6.1) would predict that heavy words appear at the end of the clause. However, that is not a perceived pattern in the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

Next, I review the relationship between question word meaning and position in the utterance. Does the meaning of the question expression remain the same regardless of its position in the utterance? This query is especially important in the case of the question words *comment* and *pourquoi*. The question word *comment* is polysemous. First consider the unusual case where *comment* is found in the *in situ* position. In Example 4.1, the participants are discussing scabies. Christine and Martine had had scabies but not Evelyne who asks about it in the last line of the given text.

Example 4.1

- C. J'ai eu la gale aussi.
- E. Pas moi.
- C. J'ai eu la gale.

- M. /inaudible/ Je jouais qu'avec des enfants sales à l'époque
 E. Ah!
 M. En Algérie./inaudible/
 C. Mais tu sais qu'à Paris
 M. pour euh, courait
 E. Oui oui.
 M. dans la terre, le
 E. Mais alors, ce, c'est comment la gale?

Evelyne's question occurs in the structure *proV Q* with right dislocation of the lexical subject. It may be roughly translated as "How is scabies?" in the sense of "What is scabies like?" The most obvious allosentence for the uttered interrogative would be *comment c'est la gale?* as the fronted alternative *Q proV*. However this fronted structure could be translated as "what do you mean, it's scabies?" thereby creating a different proposition. Additionally, these alloquestions would have radically different intonation with nuclear stress on the question word *comment* in *proV Q* but on *c'est* in *Q proV*.

It is possible that the structure *comment c'est* has been pre-empted for a "how come" meaning. This particular meaning is illustrated in Example 4.2 where *comment c'est* is necessarily used with a *que-S* clause.

Example 4.2

- C. Je payais 175 dollars et into and too utilities not included.
 E. C'est vrai?!
 C. mm ouais
 E. Ouais moi avant
 C. Tu sais ce que c'était ma chambre c'était le front porch
 E. Oh!
 C. Et c'était beaucoup plus de ça faisait la moitié de ça
 E. Et comment c'est que tu payais si cher? C'était où? /inaudible/
 M. Mais tu sais combien il paye Jean-Marc?
 C. C'était Northeast

This interrogative can be translated as "How is it that you paid so much?" or "How come you paid so much?" rather than "How did you pay so much?" In other words, it is not a cleft construction.

Another example of the polysemous nature of *comment* is the case of the Q alone structure. In this “syntactic position” *comment* in most cases means “what?” Consider Example 4.3 where Martine and Evelyne are discussing gymnastic routines.

Example 4.3

- M. j'étais pire qu'un crapaud, les jambes euh
E. Ah oui oui
M. étaient dans dans
E. Et la roue?
M. **Comment?**
E. Alors là, la roue, moi, ça s'est très mal passé /laugh/ Je sais pas, j'ai, d'habitude je la faisais pas trop mal, mais alors là je sais pas, ça s'est mal passé, là au

Martine uses the Q alone structure with the question word *comment* to mean “what” revealing she either misheard or didn’t understand. In fact, for this particular meaning of *comment*, it is necessarily found in the Q alone structure.

The question words *comment* and *pourquoi* have been previously examined for their polysemous nature. LeQuerler (1994), looking at the effects of subject position on the interpretation of the question words *comment* and *pourquoi*, concluded that the postposition of the subject forces the interpretation of the question word as intra-predicative. Coveney (1995) suggested that the question word *pourquoi* may be confused with the phrase consisting of the preposition plus pronoun phrase *pour quoi* if placed post-verbally. Example 4.4 illustrates a *pourquoi proV* structure.

Example 4.4

- M. **Pourquoi tu ris?** /laugh/
C. /full mouth/ Pour rien, c'est très bon

According to the hypothesis, the equally possible structure *tu ris pourquoi?* could be interpreted as *tu ris pour quoi?* although in this particular case, the potential confusion would have no impact on the answer given.

There is also the important issue of the multi-functional aspect of several of the question words. For instance, *quand* is a conjunction as well as a question word. I hypothesize that it is preferable for a fronted position to be reserved for the conjunction since it is necessarily clause initial unlike its interrogative counterpart. Observe the following example with a fronted *quand* working as a conjunction.

Example 4.5

- M. Oh! .. **Mais quand on voit sa femme**
E. Oui elle t'a dit tout de suite
M. **on, on imagine que c'est le genre arrière grand-mère.** /laughs/

In this context, the syntactic structure *#on voit sa femme quand* cannot be interpreted as an equivalent to the attested utterance. In spoken French, the sentence-final intonational clues help differentiate the two types of *quand* clauses whether an interrogative or not. However, reserving the initial position for the conjunction allows for early interpretation from the beginning of the utterance.

4.2.3 Identity of the verb

The identity of the verb itself may affect the choice of interrogative. For example, Lyster (1996) claims that the verb *vouloir* favors inversion. As seen in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, the verb *appeler* when paired with the question word *comment* is most often found in the Q pro-V structure. Further analysis of this topic is found in Section 4.4.1.1.

4.2.4 Conclusion

This section has examined the role of semantic factors on choice of interrogative structure. The identity of the question word has an undeniable correlation with specific types of structures in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. The root of this correlation remains to be determined.

4.3 SOCIOLINGUISTIC FACTORS

Interrogatives in Spoken French are among the most cited illustrations of socio-stylistic variation in the French Language. For example, certain communicative contexts elicit the use of certain variants, or certain speakers have access to different variants. In this section, I analyze the role of sociolinguistics in understanding interrogative variation.

4.3.1 Speaker Identity

What role does identity of each interlocutor play in the choice of interrogative structure? Are there idiolectal differences? Martine dominates all aspects of conversation in the corpus. Carbon (2003) claims that Martine is a more effective narrator (p 232-233) than Christine and Evelyne. Martine narrates stories that are highly tellable by using rhetorical devices such as rate and volume of speech, repetition and lexical choices (p. 177). Not by coincidence then, Martine is the most varied speaker in the corpus. For example, all instances of *c'est Q que pro V* are uttered by Martine. Most instances of *Q Vpro* are uttered by her as well.

4.3.2 Speech Network

The speakers in the Barnes-Blyth Corpus are members of a distinct network; they are native speakers of French living away from home in an anglophone environment. At the time of the recording, they were all instructors of French at the University of Minnesota. This particular connection inspires their discussion on their shared

experiences of communicating in English and teaching French to Americans. These facts certainly play a role in the language they produce. Example 4.1 is typical of the topics and interrogatives produced in this corpus where a metalinguistic discussion takes place on vocabulary in French and English.

Example 4.6

- M. Et puis c'est de la bonne santé .. je veux dire euh healthy, **comment on dit en français?**
C. Mm /laugh/ C'est bon pour la santé.
M. Oui! /laugh/

The success of this utterance relies on the fact that the group of speakers shares a bilingual experience.

A striking exception to the closed network is the presence of the researcher whose involvement in the recorded conversations is inconsistent throughout the corpus. As mentioned previously, her speech is not taken into account unless it has direct impact on the production of one of the participants. It is also important to note that the participants are aware that they are being recorded and so they produce speech more or less naturally in order to give the researcher data.

The three participants are for most purposes equals in university status. As mentioned earlier, Martine dominates linguistically. In contrast, the researcher is their superior at the university but not a native speaker of French. Do the structures used when addressing the researcher differ from those used among the native speakers? There is proof that that is the case in linguistic features other than WH-questions. For example, there is hesitancy regarding the use of “vous” or “tu” on the part of the participants when addressing the researcher. In a brief look at the use of Yes-No Questions, most of the questions incorporating *est-ce que* are posed to Betsy Barnes. Compare the next two examples where Evelyne asks the researcher a yes-no question using the *est-ce que* form

each time but changing the pronoun. In Example 4.7 Evelyne uses the formal pronoun *vous* but in example 4.8 she uses the informal pronoun *tu*.

Example 4.7

- E. **Est-ce que vous avez un petit jardin ou euh une backyard?**
B. Oui, derrière

Example 4.8

- E. **Betsy, est-ce que tu nous fait une, une vinaigrette, est-ce que tu utilises la vinaigrette?**
B. Je vais faire une vinaigrette /laugh/ selon euh Julia Child /laugh/. Je ne fais pas assez souvent pour le faire euh enfin, d'ailleurs, c'est un peu .. ma façon de,de

The *est-ce que* morpheme has convincing associations with polite speech in yes-no questions. How does this observation translate to the use of WH interrogatives addressed to the researcher? Examine Example 4.9 where Evelyne asks Dr. Barnes a question:

Example 4.9

- B. /laugh/ Non, ça ne fait rien! C'est, de toute façon, la répétition ça continue pendant deux heures, alors
E. Pendant deux heures÷
C. Deux heures? Par semaine?
M. Oh oui, mais le temps de s'échauffer et tout ça
E. **Qu'est-ce que vous travaillez en ce moment,** comme euh
B. Oh! On fait un peu de tout
E. Un peu de tout.

As discussed earlier, the *est-ce que* morpheme frozen in the complex pronoun *qu'est-ce que* is not the Q esque proV equivalent of the ungrammatical structure **que* proV. It is therefore inappropriate to pre-emptively label the structure seen in Example 4.9 as a polite version. However, the potential associations of *qu'est-ce que* with polite

speech cannot be entirely discounted especially in contrast with the *in situ* form. In the next example, a bizarre WH interrogative is produced by Evelyne, which may be accounted for by the fact that she is speaking to the researcher.

Example 4.10

- B. de faits .. précis, complexes, parfois, détaillés .. /sigh/ puisque la phonologie française, elle est complexe /laugh/
M. Tch! Oui!
E. **Qu'est-ce que tu appelles, qu'est-ce que recouvre la phonolo, phonologie?**
B. Enfin c'est
M. Des phonèmes! C'est ça.

This interrogative turn involves a hesitation, repair and finally a WH interrogative of questionable grammaticality. Coveney refers to this WH structure as Q esq V N, an uncommon combination of *est-ce que* and inversion. I believe that this utterance reinforces my argument that *qu'est-ce que* is a single question word. According to this argumentation, example 4.10 is a simple case of NP inversion. Not all interaction with the researcher is different from that observed among the participants. As we will see, instances of style shifting with WH-questions proposed in the next sections do not necessarily involve the researcher.

4.3.3 Interrogatives: Register and style

In the graphic in Table 4.5, I provide a continuum based on commonly held assumptions about the use and evaluation of interrogative structures. This continuum will serve as the basis of the discussion that follows. Structures separated by a dotted line do not have fixed socio-stylistic evaluation in relation to each other.

Table 4.5

Q V-pro	Q esq proV	ProV Q	Q proV	c'est Q que proV	Q c'est que proV	Q que proV	Q esq c'est que proV Q c'est que c'est que proV
<i>more formal/careful style</i>				<i>informal/colloquial</i>			
←-----→							

In the case of the Barnes-Blyth Corpus, a single register is available for observation. For the purposes of this discussion, the register is labeled colloquial. On the surface, the communicative situation is stable for Sessions I-III. Given the above continuum, one assumes that in a particular communicative context, only certain interrogative structures will be used.

In Table 4.6 the interrogative structures found in the Barnes-Blyth corpus are repeated in order of frequency. In two cases below, two categories are observed as one. In the first case, Q proV and *quesque* proV are deemed to be a single category since they share the same syntactic structure (an initial question expression followed by pro V). In the second case, Q and Q ça are together since they share the distinctive aspect of an absence of a verb. Note also that in Table 4.6, interrogative structures whose question expressions have the syntactic role of subject have not been included.

Table 4.6

Syntactic Structure	TOTALS
Q proV	56
quesque pro V	47
proV Q	59
Q	25
Q ça	2
QV pro	7
c'est Q que proV	4
Q esque proV	3
Q c'est que proV	2
Q que proV	0
Q c'est que c'est que proV	0
Q esq c'est que proV	0

There are three distinct categories emerging from this distribution. First, there are the high-frequency structures indicated by dark grey: Q proV, ProV Q and Q. Next, there are the low-frequency categories indicated by light grey: Q V-pro, Q esque proV, c'est Q que proV and Q c'est que proV. Finally the unrepresented categories, the white cells, include: Q que proV, Q c'est que c'est que proV and Q est-ce que c'est que proV. Figures 4.1-4.3 are three continuums displaying this distribution. In the continuums the combined categories are represented by an inclusive super-category: **Q PRO V** and **Q**.

Figure 4.1 High-frequency structures

Q V _{pro}	Q esque proV	ProV Q	Q ProV	c'est Q que proV	Q c'est que proV	Q que proV	Q esq c'est que pro V Q c'est que c'est que pro V
<i>more formal/careful style</i>				<i>informal/colloquial</i>			
←-----→							

Figure 4.2 Low-frequency structures

Q V _{pro}	Q esque proV	ProV Q	Q ProV	c'est Q que proV	Q c'est que proV	Q que proV	Q esq c'est que pro V Q c'est que c'est que pro V
<i>more formal/careful style</i>				<i>informal/colloquial</i>			
←-----→							

Figure 4.3 Unrepresented structures

Q V-pro	Q est-ce que proV	ProV Q	Q ProV	c'est Q que proV	Q c'est que proV	Q que proV	Q esq c'est que proV Q c'est que c'est que proV
<i>more formal/careful style</i>						<i>informal/colloquial</i>	
←-----→							

For the high-frequency structures, two of the structures are positioned right next to each other on the first continuum. Their adjacency helps define our register as well as lend support to the continuum as initially proposed. I therefore hypothesize that the heretofore-ignored Q alone structure should be right in the middle of our continuum next to the other best-represented structures.

Figure 4.1a High-frequency structures

Q V _{pro}	Q esq proV	ProV Q	Q ProV	Q	c'est Q que proV	Q c'est que proV	Q que proV	Q esq c'est que pro V Q c'est que c'est que pro V
<i>more formal/careful style</i>					<i>informal/colloquial</i>			
←-----→								

As we can see in Figure 4.2, the low-frequency structures lie on either side of the high-frequency structures. If we vary in register or style, we vary slightly. And as can be seen in Figure 4.3, the unrepresented structures are those furthest from the high-frequency structures on the continuum.

Socio-stylistics has helped make decisions about which categories are appropriate overall. It distinguishes the high-frequency structures, low-frequency structures and unrepresented structures. In other words, socio-stylistic factors indicate the core and peripheral structures of this corpus. Now, can it help make even further distinctions?

Since the high-frequency structures are used in an identical communicative context, I claim that the differences among these three structures are semantico-pragmatic and not stylistic. The choice among these structures is not an example of free variation; instead they are differentiated by pragmatic concepts that are explored in Sections 4.4 and 4.5. I claim that these frequently used structures are stylistically neutral in terms of the context and in relation to each other.

For the unrepresented structures, a situation of socio-linguistic speculation remains with the following possibilities: First, there exists the argument that the discursive function assigned to the structures was never appropriate in the contexts of the corpus. Second, the register of the Barnes-Blyth corpus was not appropriate for the use of

certain structures. It is no coincidence that the unrepresented structures had the lowest socio-stylistic evaluations. Third, it is possible yet unlikely that the structures are not a part of the dialect/idiolect of the speakers, in other words they would never utter these structures under any circumstance.

For the low-frequency structures, Figure 4.2 illustrates that in the corpus, there are occasionally changes to slightly higher (with inversion and *est-ce que*) and lower (with clefts) registers/styles. Why are these structures represented at all? Why use a structure deemed inappropriate/unexpected by the common distribution? Section 4.3.4 examines the employment of these particular structures.

4.3.4 Stylistic and Metaphorical register shift

The use of these unexpected structures in the context at hand may be regarded as a type of stylistic or metaphorical switching. Gumperz and Blom (1971) distinguish a particular type of language switch that they call metaphorical switching in which there is no particular change in participants' rights and obligations among the same interlocutors. In particular, "the language shift here relates to particular kinds of topics or subject matters rather than to change in social situation. Characteristically the situations in question allow for the enactment of two or more different relationships among the same set of individuals" (p. 296). They continue: "the semantic effect of metaphorical switching depends on the existence of regular relationships between variables and social situation...The context in which one of a set of alternates is regularly used becomes part of its meaning so that when this form is then employed in context where it is not normal, it brings in some of the flavor of this original setting" (p. 296).

Myers-Scotton (1988) discusses the use of style switching as a means of negotiating interactional power for the speaker. Style switching in this corpus is a

marked choice. I hypothesize that the speakers switch to lower registers in order to create a feeling of intimacy. They also use a full range of interrogative structures as a display of their control over their multiple identities. Applying Myers-Scotton's terminology to the Barnes-Blyth corpus, stylistically "inappropriate" interrogative structures are purposefully chosen to create and re-create relationships among interlocutors.

Mishoe (1998) studies styleswitching among speakers of Southern English in rural North Carolina who have access to two distinct styles of speech. Her research question is as follows (p. 164): If the situation is unchanged and the participants remain constant, what is the motivation for styleswitching?" She claims that "speakers switch between the styles in their repertoire to project different dimensions of themselves" (p. 162). Referring to Myers-Scotton's description of non-situationally motivated switching, Mishoe describes the shift in her data as switching as a marked choice. She finds that an important reason that speakers make the choice to switch is for purposes of identity or solidarity: "speakers have multiple identities: one way to change identities in an exchange is to change the linguistic variety that is indexing one identity to a linguistic variety that will index another" (p. 169). Another reason for style switch that she identifies is the internal factor of contemplation and memory for a formal or solemn moment. Therefore she concludes that speakers alternate between styles to make subtle changes in a relationship or to change the mood or tone.

Mishoe's discussion of stylistic shift is pertinent to the situation in the Barnes-Blyth Corpus. Indeed, for the most part the situation is unchanged and the participants remain constant in this corpus but there are moments of purposeful style switches illustrated in the next section.

4.3.5 Style shifting in the Barnes-Blyth Corpus

This section assesses the role of style shifting in the Barnes-Blyth Corpus. First, switching to a more formal style is under consideration. According to the stylistic continuums, the usage of the Q Vpro and Q esq pro V represent changes to a more formal register. In contrast, the usage of the cleft structures, c'est Q que proV and Q c'est que proV represent changes to a less formal register.

There are seven instances of pronoun inversion in the corpus. Two appear to involve fixed expressions, however there are several used for interactional power or play like Example 4.11. This particular example involves a meta-linguistic discussion about the verb “*réaliser*” in French, which is technically supposed to be used in the context of “to realize a dream” and not “to understand that”.

Example 4.11

- M. y a différents niveaux de lecture.
E. Normalement si tu es un puriste, tu peux le pas dire euh euh tu si tu emploies le mot réaliser, et bien tu ne peux réaliser qu'une maquette ou quelque chose comme ça, normalement.
C. Quelque chose de .. solide, de concret
E. Oui de concret, mais maintenant on utilise ça euh
C. Ouais.
E. Alors y a des profs, en France, qui sont très puritains, qui te font remarquer. C'est
M. Ah oui.
E. Ah oui oui! oh ben.
B. /laugh/
E. Non, c'est vrai, et puis ah j'ai dit au niveau
M. Oh j'ai réalisé ce qu'elle avait dit /laughs/. **Que voulez-vous dire?**
E. Qu'elle a réalisé!
M. Retournez en première année!

In this case, Martine is assuming and playing the role of a strict professor who is reacting to the less-acceptable use of the verb. She uses inversion as a contrast to the liberal use of *réaliser*. This idea that she is taking on a persona is justified and supported

by her subsequent sentence telling her colleague in a joking manner to go back to first year (French).

The other potential case of elevating the register involves the three occurrences of Q esque proV. All three of these tokens appear in the same conversation that focuses on the role of Teaching Assistants at the University of Minnesota. In Example 4.12, Christine who never succeeds in finishing her thought, asks a nearly rhetorical question concerning the kind of work they are required to do as TAs.

Example 4.12

- C. Mais c'est dingue!
E. Alors là vraiment
M. qui assistent Madame B.!
C. Mais c'est dingue, comment est-ce que euh est-ce qu'on peut nous donner
M. Ce que je comprends pas
C. la responsabilité de, de de, de corriger des copies
M. quand on a juste une connaissance, enfin de
C. sur un cours, qu'on on
M. Un cours où les gens ils payent euh quand même cinquante dollars le crédit, je sais pas combien, et et on a aucun /inaudible/ c'est un cours, un cours trois mille hein, ça veut dire qu'ils vont bientôt avoir leur license!

I hypothesize that this concentrated usage of the Q esque proV structures is in part due to the fact that the three speakers were analyzing their roles (and nearly complaining) in the presence of one of their professors, Betsy. In order to decrease the face-threatening act, a more polite interrogative variant is employed.

Now examine instances of switching to lower registers or styles that in this case involves two types of clefts. There are only two examples of Q c'est que proV in the corpus. Note that this type of cleft is labeled as one of the lowest styles in Coveney's chart. Example 4.13 presents a convincing illustration of style shifting. In this example, the women are talking about work as teaching assistants. The initials in the transcription are used to hide the identity of the professors at the university.

Example 4.13

- E. Oh y en a qui ont drôlement du travail!/inaudible/
M. Attends! Martha et Debby
C. Ouais./inaudible/
M. elles, elles ont assisté, elles assistent Madame
C. M.B.!
E. M.B.!
M. B., et ben, elles /shushing noises/, il faut /inaudible/ tout le livre [et il faut qu'ils fassent des discussions de groupe chaque semaine, et qu'ils corrigent les devoirs.
E. /inaudible/ c'est ce qui m'est arrivé. C'est pour ça que
M. **et qui c'est que tu avais?**
E. R., bon Monsieur R. Bon alors j'ai corrigé
M. Et c'était dur?
E. ben j'ai corrigé le mid-term

Example 4.13 demonstrates a case of purposeful style shifting because Martine is aligning herself with the listener as a sign of solidarity. It's an 'us against them', 'Teaching Assistant versus professors' view of the world that is reinforced by using a less-frequent and much less formal form. Note that although this token is from the same context illustrated above in 4.12, the question is specifically directed towards her peer rather than her professor.

There are four examples of the second type of cleft, c'est Q que proV. In the next example, Martine aligns herself with Evelyne by using a clefted structure.

Example 4.14

- E. Alors tu sais, oui, oh pff! Moi je, je travaille comme une maîtrise en France
M. **Et l'examen c'est quand que tu le passes?** Oui oui
E. Alors euh

As Lambrecht (2001) points out, argument-focus clefts involve information that is presupposed. But having a highly presupposed open proposition does not necessarily predict the use of this structure since as will be discussed later in this chapter the *in situ* structure is used for the same purpose. Therefore, this is style shifting, not pragmatic

variation. In other words, *tu le passes quand?* is pragmatically appropriate in this situation but not chosen for stylistic purposes. Martine shows diversity in her speech for a display of control as well as intimacy.

4.3.6 Language Play

There are several examples in the corpus where it appears that the interrogative form was chosen for its comedic or poetic effect. In the first example, the *in situ* form with the right dislocated emphatic pronoun plays a part in a word-play joke mirroring the bizarre preceding statement.

Example 4.15

- M. Parce que Ed c'est un musicien!
E. Ah oui! /laughs/
C. Et /inaudible/ lui c'est pas de la guitare, moi!
E. **C'est quoi toi?**
C. /onomatopeas/ /laughs/

In the next example, 4.16, the surprising use of pronoun inversion only adds to the humor of the mystery of what Mormons do on Friday nights.

Example 4.16

- M. Ils sont mormons, et je sais que le vendredi soir ils font quelque chose
E. Ah ouais.
M. qui, ils ø m'ont jamais dit, mais ils font quelque chose /laughs/
E. Ils font quelque chose! **Que font-ils?**
M. Et /laughs/ euh voilà.
E. Et voilà /inaudible/
C. /inaudible/ il faut espionner
B. Oui c'est ça.

Applying the terminology to be used in 4.5, the open proposition “Mormons do X on Friday nights” is highly active in this context. In fact, it is so highly active that it is humorous. The use of inversion in this context reinforces an underlying sentiment such as, “Tell us! What is X?!”

4.3.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, socio-stylistics is crucial in determining the range of structures used in interaction. In fact the accepted evaluations of certain structures become a powerful tool in communication as we saw in the less-represented structures. Speakers manipulate this shared knowledge and so make comments on their relationships by using unexpected structures in interaction. Nevertheless, as the rest of this chapter indicates, understanding interrogatives involves more levels of analysis than socio-stylistics alone. Non-stylistic variation is the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

4.4 ILLOCUTIONARY FACTORS

The second component of language crucial to understanding interrogative choice is the illocutionary factor. This component is related to the first since neither are concerned with the formal aspects of the interrogative but the participants and goals involved in the communicative event. In this section, I discuss and add to the significant work in this area offered by Coveney (2002).

4.4.1 Types of Questions: Addressees and goals

According to Coveney, the communicative function of the question plays a significant role in the choice of the realized structure. He claims that interrogative communicative functions where the speaker does not expect an answer from the addressee (such as rhetorical questions) disfavor the use of the *in situ* form. Here are his definitions (1995) of communicative functions followed by an example from the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

1) interlocutor-addressed: request for information, addressed to an interlocutor who (normally) replies

Example 4.17

Et combien de pages il faut à peu près?

2) self-addressed: request for information, addressed to oneself (generally because of a temporary lapse of memory) and the answer is generally provided by the speaker

Example 4.18

Oui, mais les deux autres ont pris, **qu'est-ce qu'ils ont pris?** Du machin avec du felafel.

3) rhetorical question: the answer to the question is assumed to be known by the addressee as well as by the speaker and the speaker uses the interrogative to assert emphatically the implicated proposition.

Example 4.19

M. Une salière et une poivrière, on dit, non?

E. **Mais pourquoi tu révises pas**

M. Un poivrier?/inaudible/

E. **ton vocabulaire avant de venir?**

4) topic-introducing question: in order to introduce a new topic, the speaker poses a question which they themselves immediately answer

Example 4.20

E. je m'en suis déjà bien aperçue, j'en avais déjà parlé, on m'a dit non non, c'est pas un précédent, oh vous vous trompez!

M. **Comment est-ce que ça se passe ce TA deux?** Euh parce qu'on nous a demandé, sur une feuille, pour l'année prochaine, si on voulait enseigner, quel niv, non on n'a pas demandé le niveau, euh pour le, l'été seulement, je crois on a demandé le niveau, mais euh, si on voulait être TA deux.

How well do these communicative functions account for the data in the Barnes-Blyth corpus? The definition of the rhetorical question appears somewhat problematic. Alternatively, it could include more widely accepted notions of the term 'rhetorical', such as 'a question that does not invite a reply.' Secondly, I suggest a fifth category that could be called a 'suggestive question' since it functions as suggestions or recommendations rather than true interlocutor-addressed questions. In other words, suggestive question: a question posed as a suggestion for action.

Example 4.21

Pourquoi tu fais pas le Féminisme en Chine?

Finally, as discussed in the section on the speech network for this corpus, the participants involved ask many questions about language, translations, words in French and in English. In many cases, it is not clear whether or not the speaker is addressing herself or the group. It is indeed possible that the speaker herself may be the first interlocutor to remember the translation of a certain word. Therefore, we have cases of potentially self-addressed questions. In other words the set of addressees is self plus others.

In the Example 4.22, Christine knows she has heard the word for the piece of furniture in question before, but she cannot recall it during the conversation. This example most likely fits best under interlocutor-addressed, but the speaker could have answered it, as reinforced by the use of “*déjà*” (‘again’) at the end of her question.

Example 4.22

- B. Ben je pensais qu'il était bien temps, d'enlever les cartes /chuckle/ de Noël /inaudible/
M. Oui
C. **Comment ça s'appelle, ce meuble-là, déjà?** Le meuble tu vois
E. C'est dos d'âne.
C. Un un secrétaire dos d'âne?
E. Secrétaire dos d'âne.

In Example 4.23, Martine is trying to remember the word for *trousseau*. She comes up with several words approximating it. In fact her question is finally answered by Evelyne but probably only because of Martine's attempts at self-reply. This example doesn't fit neatly into either self-addressed or interlocutor-addressed.

Example 4.23

- E. Les draps, tout ça, on on ø s'en sert même pas, c'est des draps en lin .. il faut pour laver ça. C'est incroyable, c'est lourd
- M. Oui oui.
- E. tu sais, il faut, tu ø peux pas mettre ça dans une machine à laver, ça ferait tellement gros, c'est tellement épais, normalement ça fait pas aussi, tu sais quand tu les laves à la main
- M. mm mm
- E. tu faisais étendre, bon ben, on ø peut pas s'en servir puisque c'est tellement épais. C'est bien plus agréable d'avoir des draps, euh contemporains
- C. /inaudible/
- M. **C'était la, comment on appelle ça? La .. du mar, de la mariée, pas la dot, la?**
- C. Oh oui! La ? Oh oui!
- M. La trousse? Non!
- E. Le trousseau!

This function is therefore labeled ambiguously-addressed for the purposes of this dissertation.

Table 4.7 indicates the division of interrogatives in the corpus according to communicative function:

Table 4.7

Communicative Function	% in Barnes-Blyth Corpus
Interlocutor addressed	77.5%
Self-addressed	6.4%
Rhetorical question	6.4%
Topic-introducing question	1.4%
Suggestive question	1.8%
Ambiguously-Addressed	6.4%

As can be seen by the distribution in Table 4.7, most interrogatives in the corpus are interlocutor-addressed questions. This finding follows from the primary function of interrogatives being the request for information from another speaker. The remaining interrogative tokens are more evenly distributed among the communicative functions.

Does the communicative function of interrogatives play a role in the choice of corresponding structure? To explore the link between communicative function and structure, Table 4.8 shows how the functions are divided among the most frequent structures.

Table 4.8

Q proV	Interlocutor	Self	Rhetorical	Topic	Suggestive	Ambiguous
<i>Où</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Quand</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Combien</i>	2	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Comment</i>	14	1	1	0	0	14
<i>Pourquoi</i>	9	0	1	0	5	0
<i>Quesque</i>	34	8	5	0	0	0
<i>Qui</i>	1	0	0	1	0	0
<i>quel N</i>	4	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Lequel</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	66	9	7	1	5	14

proV Q	Interlocutor	Self	Rhetorical	Topic	Suggestive	Ambiguous
<i>Où</i>	13	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Quand</i>	4	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Combien</i>	3	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Comment</i>	2	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Pourquoi</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Quoi</i>	26	2	1	0	0	0
<i>Qui</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0
<i>quel N</i>	7	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Lequel</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	57	2	1	0	0	0

Q	Interlocutor	Self	Rhetorical	Topic	Suggestive	Ambiguous
<i>Où</i>	2	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Quand</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Combien</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Comment</i>	5	0	1	0	0	0
<i>Pourquoi</i>	6	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Quoi</i>	3	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Qui</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0
<i>quel N</i>	6	0	0	1	0	0
<i>Lequel</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
TOTALS	23	0	1	1	0	0

Table 4.8 illustrates some important trends in illocutionary function of interrogatives. All structures show a strong tendency to use interrogatives for the interlocutor-addressed function. However, the Q proV category displays the most variation among types of illocutionary function. This observation is consistent with Coveney's broad claim that *in situ* is used for interlocutor-addressed questions. The additional illocutionary function types (suggestive and ambiguous) are useful for organizing the utterances in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, especially for the Q pro V category.

Also apparent in Table 4.8 are a few contradictions to the fronted versus *in situ* claims made by Coveney. First let's pay heed to the rhetorical question found *in situ*, a case which Coveney believes to be a categorical impossibility.

Example 4.24

Mais **on a l'air de quoi**? Uh you know, the tip is not included /laughs/ Enfin franchement! Alors on l'a pas fait, évidemment.

This particular interrogative is a fixed rhetorical expression (roughly translatable as 'what are people going to think?') and limited in its variation by the preposition. In this case, the preposition constraint is more important than the communicative tendency.

The next apparent anomaly occurs with self-addressed questions *in situ*. In Example 4.25, the speaker uses an *in situ* form for a clearly self-addressed question.

Example 4.25

à à l'université, **ça fait quoi**, six mille francs par an dis donc!

The expression *ça fait quoi* has a very specific meaning especially in this context roughly translatable as "let's see". The use of this structure in this context may be explained by concepts such as answerability and referential specificity discussed later in this chapter.

A context where the communicative function may play an interesting role is the *quesque* vs *quoi* contrast. The structure *qu'est-ce que* is often used in both interlocutor-addressed as well as rhetorical contexts. A common rhetorical question is the formulaic *qu'est-ce que tu veux?* loosely translated into English as the rhetorical “so what can I say?” Observe this usage in Example 4.26:

Example 4.26

- M. Mais l'école buissonnière n'existait pas .. n'existait pas, au contraire, j'adorais l'école. On me, on me remarquait là
 E. Tu pouvais, ben oui!
 M. Puis je pouvais
 C. Tu pouvais /inaudible/ tuer tout le monde! /chuckle/
 M. Je pouvais prendre les cartables, à la fin de l'heure.
 C. Ça c'est un truc bizarre!
 M. Et les mettre autour de mes pieds. **Ben qu'est-ce que tu veux**, j'étais encore jeune
 C. Ouais, /inaudible/ J'arrête pas de /inaudible/ dans ma classe

The use of this rhetorical device requires this fronted structure. The *in situ* counterpart *#tu veux quoi?* does not achieve the same effect.

Coveney (2002) reformulates his communicative function descriptions and implements the following four categories: 1) Communicative Functions where the speaker wants an answer from the addressee, 2) Communicative Functions where the speaker wants an answer from self, 3) Quoted Communicative Functions, 4) Sub-Topic Introducing questions. His communicative functions 1-3 were treated above and in the next section I examine the quoted interrogative.

4.4.2 Reported Interrogatives

A final important illocutionary function is reported speech. There are 24 instances of reported speech in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. Table 4.9 shows the distribution of reported speech interrogatives according to syntactic category. Note how the

distribution balance among fronted and *in situ* interrogatives seen overall for interrogatives no longer exists in the case of reported speech.

Table 4.9 Reported Speech by syntactic category

N= 24	quesque proV	Q proV	Q	quesqui V	QV pro	qui esqui V	QesqN V
Tokens	8	6	3	3	2	1	1

Question formation is distinctly different when the speakers quote what they said in the past. When the participants report what they or someone else said in the past, the *in situ* form is never used. This observation is consistent with Coveney's (2002) remarks on reported speech. Further, Gumperz (1982) in his discussion on (bilingual) code-switching, claims that code-switching is often found in instances of quotations or reported speech. This assertion may help explain why for instance in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, the QVpro structure is used for reported speech but not proV Q.

Notice the interrogative in Example 4.27 where Martine reports what her students asked her when they went to an Algerian restaurant.

Example 4.27

M. nous nous sommes arrêtés dans un restaurant algérien .. où on nous a servi un bon couscous. Parce qu'ils travaillent sur les adjectifs. Ils m'ont tous dit **qu'est-ce que c'est un couscous?** Ouuh! Pas de problème!

In this particular utterance, it is very likely that the interaction did not even occur in French. So the choice of interrogative is not related to actual event. There is no structural mimicry in the re-telling. Instead, there is a near categorical tendency to use fronted structures in reported speech.

An interesting case of reported speech involves “teacherese”. In the case of “teacherese” it is very likely that the language that the participants produce in the classroom is different from the language they use amongst themselves. This type of

reported speech is therefore very much tied to the socio-stylistic component of interrogative forms discussed above. In Example 4.28, Evelyne self-reports classroom talk using pronoun inversion to ask her question.

Example 4.28

Et alors, le premier qui écrit ça bien, a un point pour son équipe. Bon, ça c'est une des choses. Après, je leur dis, je leur dis une petite histoire, tu vois. Euh, en général, c'est Madame Martin a 35 Francs dans son sac. Elle achète un livre de 25 Francs et une euh enfin enfin autre chose, et **puis alors combien lui, combien lui reste-t-il?** Ils connaissent tout le vocabulaire, alors bon, alors la première équipe qui trouve le bon résultat, a un autre point.

Unlike the examples of quoted speech unrelated to the classroom, we have reason to believe that this reported interrogative structure is identical to the actual interrogative structure used in the interaction. As we have observed earlier, pronoun inversion is quite rare in natural speech, but in most cases, classroom speech is far from natural. Nevertheless, the hesitation on the speaker's part may be indicative of a lack of certainty of the grammatical form.

What are the possible explanations for this tendency for quoted interrogatives to avoid the structure *proV Q*? According to Coveney (2002, p.226), it could be due to the lack of discourse context in reported speech whereby little information has the opportunity to be presupposed. I don't find this explanation to be adequate or suitable. Why does the information not need to be presupposed in the new context if it was in real time? Plus, in order to tell a good story, enough background needs to be provided so that the dialogue makes sense. In Section 4.3.4, I discuss a proposal that encompasses the reported speech tendency and other communicative effects discussed above.

4.4.3 Metalinguistic and identificational functions

An important function of asking questions is the metalinguistic question. As mentioned previously, in this corpus there are many questions concerning “naming & saying” which result from the interaction of bilingual speakers. Most of these “naming/saying” questions are realized in the Q proV (*comment tu dis?*) structure. This particular function accounts for the large number of interrogatives with the question word *comment*.

Another common role in the corpus is the identification function. This task appears to be equally divided between proV Q (*c’est quoi*) and Q est-ce que proV (*qu’est-ce que c’est*). Unlike the metalinguistic function, this function does not stem from the shared experiences of the participants. This seemingly equal division will be discussed further in the sections that follow.

4.4.4 Questionness

I propose that the above illocutionary factors be understood under an umbrella concept of *questionness* and *question marking*. Question marking involves the overt structural components indicating interrogativity such as: 1) Q in COMP 2) Inversion 3) Use of a question morpheme 4) Redundancy (a combination of 1-3). In the case of Spoken French, question marking involves a fronted Q (with or without a cleft). By these definitions, the *in situ* structure has none of the overt structural components indicating interrogativity due to its resemblance to a declarative.

I claim that certain communicative contexts require question marking. Such contexts are those in which the *questionness*, or identification as a question, of the question is less evident. Interlocutor addressed questions are the most basic or prototypical questions. In most cases they do not require question marking- so the *in situ* structure is acceptable. However, for less question-like questions (rhetorical/reported

speech), the speaker must insist on the question quality of the utterance by question marking.

Take into consideration this next illustration of reported speech:

Example 4.29

- M. C'était fini. Alors je rentre à la maison, évidemment, Papa et Maman attendaient anxieux, demandent
E. Oui, c'est ça
M.E. les résultats!
M. Parce que moi ils ils, ils s'occupaient de moi, minutieusement
E. Oh oui moi aussi!/laugh/
M. Et puis et puis alors euh, Papa me disait, saut en hauteur, **co, combien, combien tu as?** Un mètre euh, et puis j'ai dit, ben, ben non euh
E. Non.
M. Je sais pas.

Reported speech interrogatives, according to my analysis has a questionness status that must be reinforced by question marking. In Example 4.29, the Q in COMP form provides the required overt structure. In the above case, I assert that the non-question marked structure *#tu as combien?* is unacceptable due to the issue of questionness.

4.4.5 Conclusion

This section has described how the illocutionary function of an interrogative influences its structure. The *in situ* form has very limited functional use as compared to the fronted structure. This observation was explained by the concept of questionness where the least prototypical questions require question marking, which is not satisfied by the post-verbal question word.

4.5. INFORMATION STRUCTURE FACTORS

Coveney (2002, 1995) in his broad discussion of variation refers to such notions as informativeness and end-focus, which he claims have an important role to play in interrogative structure choice. This section takes as a starting point Coveney's belief in the role of information in interrogatives with a systematic application of an established formulation of information structure (Lambrecht, 1994) in an attempt to make Coveney's somewhat vague notions more concrete. This section is also an exploration of the explanatory power of information structure for interrogatives in French. A successful implementation would demonstrate that one motivation for the choice of a structure over another lies in the speaker's pragmatic manipulation of the question based on his or her understanding of what the listener knows or is thinking of at the moment of the utterance.

In section 4.1 I claimed that pragmatics play a central role in determining the choice amongst the most frequent structures: Q proV, proV Q and Q. I begin this section by discussing Coveney's term End-Focus and determining how that concept corresponds to my proposals.

4.5.1 End-Focus and Verb type

End-Focus as discussed by Coveney (1995) is essentially a premise centering on the concept of informativeness. His hypothesis is as follows: "That in accordance with the principle of End-Focus, the less informative the SVC [Subject Verb Complement] part of the interrogative, the greater will be the tendency to use SVQ" (p. 149). Coveney operationalizes informativeness by these components of interrogatives: the subject, verb and any complement. He found that short SVCs favour the *in situ* structure but very long ones do not disfavor it. He also found that interrogatives with the copula favor the *in situ* form. Finally, proV Q occurs more often when there is no other complement besides the

question expression. The verb type category is most relevant to our discussion and is treated in the next section.

As mentioned above, Coveney found that lexical verbs are more compatible with fronted structures whereas copular verbs are more compatible with the *in situ* structure. Table 4.10 summarizes the corresponding findings for the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

Table 4.10

Question structure vs. verb type	Q in COMP		Q <i>in situ</i>		Total
	Q proV	<i>quesque</i> pro V	proV Q	proV <i>quoi</i>	
Lexical Verbs	51	27	10	12	100
Copular Verbs	5	20	21	15	61
Totals	56	47	31	27	161

The most striking finding is the lack of copular verbs in the Q pro V structure when Q is not *quesque*. Indeed most of the lexical verbs (78%) are found in a Q in COMP structure. The copular verbs are more evenly divided between Q in COMP and Q *in situ*, however a copular in a Q in COMP structure is most often *quesque* pro V. Overall the tendencies observed by Coveney hold for the trends in the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

4.5.2 Information Structure Concepts

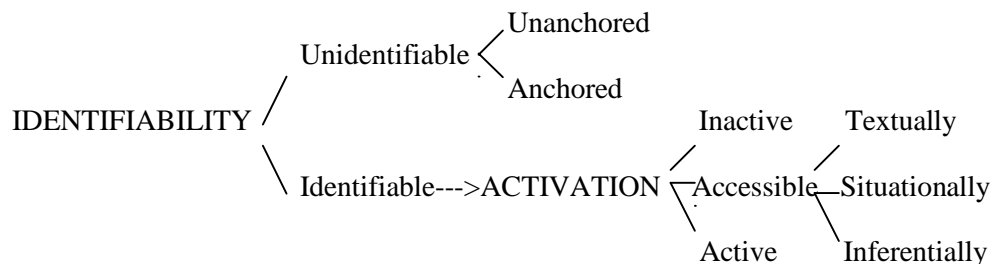
Information structure analysis relies on the existence and comparison of *allosentences*: sets of sentences that share the same truth conditions yet have different form and use. A common example is active vs. passive voice. Interrogative structures in French, as exemplified above, provide many allosentence combinations. Information structure explains the relationship between the structure of a sentence and the discourse

context in which it is uttered. More specifically, according to Lambrecht, the morpho-syntactic and prosodic structure of the sentence may reflect the speaker's assumptions about the hearer's knowledge and consciousness at the time of the utterance.

Following is a summary of important Information Structure concepts according to Lambrecht (1994):

Presuppositions:

- a. **Knowledge Presupposition:** The set of propositions lexico-grammatically evoked in a sentence which the speakers assumes the hearer already knows or believes at the time the sentence is uttered
- b. **Consciousness Presupposition:** (Identifiability & Activation Presupposition) A discourse referent is considered *identifiable* if the speaker assumes that a representation of the referent is already stored in the hearer's mind at the time of the utterance. An identifiable discourse referent is *active* if the speaker assumes its mental representation is in the hearer's focus of consciousness at the time of an utterance.



- c. **Topicality Presupposition.** An entity is presupposed to be topical if the speaker assumes that the hearer considers it a center of current interest and hence a potential locus of predication.

Assertion: The proposition expressed by a sentence which the hearer is expected to know as a result of hearing the sentence uttered.

Focus: The component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the K-presupposition. A focus is by definition the unpredictable element of a proposition.

How do these concepts work? In Lambrecht and Michaelis (1998), Lambrecht's three focus articulation types are represented according to the above information structure principles. Consider their explanations and examples:

- 1) Argument Focus. (Lambrecht and Michaelis ex 21a' p. 496)

Example: *SOCIETY's to blame.*

Context: He should be pardoned.

Presuppositions:

KP: x is to blame (for his crimes)

TP: The KP 'x is to blame' is ratified

Assertion: x=society

Focus: society

Focus domain: NP

2) Predicate Focus. (Lambrecht and Michaelis ex 21b' p. 497)

Example: *I slipped on the ICE.*

Context: I hurt my foot yesterday.

Presuppositions:

KP: ----

TP: speaker is ratified topic for comment C

Assertion: C=slipped on the ice

Focus: slipped on the ice.

Focus domain: VP

3) Sentence Focus. (Lambrecht and Michaelis ex 21c' p. 497)

Example: *Your SHOE'S untied.*

Context: ----

Presuppositions:

KP: ----

TP: ----

Assertion: your shoe's untied

Focus: your shoe's untied

Focus domain: S

In order to evaluate the status of any given structure, it must be analyzed in contrast with other potential structures with the same propositional content. The goal is to find synonymous grammatical structures that would be pragmatically inappropriate in the given context thereby restricting the use of a particular structure.

4.5.3 Information Structure and Interrogatives

Information Structure has proven to work satisfactorily for analysis of the pragmatics of declarative utterances. How well does it account for interrogatives? The

above information structure principles were successfully applied to WH-questions in English by Lambrecht and Michaelis (1998). In their study, they state: “It is typically assumed that the WH-constituent of an information question is the focus, since IQs have essentially the same information-structure representation as declarative sentences with argument-focus articulation” (p. 509-510). According to Lambrecht and Michaelis, this idea is not uncontroversial since the Q word brings no new propositional information relative to what is presupposed (p. 511). However, “utterance of a WH-question pragmatically asserts the desire of the speaker to know the identity of the referent inquired about via the WH-expression”(p. 513). Further evidence for the presupposition status of the SVC component of a constituent question comes from the reliance of this understanding in many jokes. They demonstrate the application of information structure to interrogatives in their example 40c’ (p. 521):

Sentence: *What did AUDREY BUY the other day?*

Context: Interlocutors know that Audrey went shopping some time ago, but have not recently discussed this fact.

Presuppositions:

KP: Audrey bought x the other day.

TP: ----

Assertion: x=what?

Focus: what

Given the above assumptions, the aforementioned general Information Structure schema with several components relevant for all WH-Interrogatives are articulated in the following way:

Presuppositions:

- a) **KP**: open proposition (involving x)
- b) **CP**: topic= active or accessible or inactive;
KP= active or accessible or inactive
- c) **TP**: topic is ratified/unratified

Assertion: x= question word or expression

Focus: question word or expression

This particular application of Information Structure to interrogatives leaves for very little potentially valuable information to be gleaned from a full analysis. The only category in which the pragmatics (context) will influence the analysis is under “b” above: the CP of the KP. For example, with an utterance such as “*il joue où?*” many of the Information Structure categories that can be filled in without a context:

Presuppositions:

1) KP: he plays x place

2) CP: topic (*il*): active

KP: ?

3) TP: (*il*): ratified

Assertion: x= *où*

Focus: *où*

The topicality presupposition as related to the subject pronoun of the interrogatives in this corpus is overwhelmingly ratified so will not be considered on a case-by-case basis. Therefore the core of the information structure analysis takes place within the Consciousness Presupposition status of the Knowledge Presupposition.

I propose another way of representing activation since this term is essential to understanding differences among interrogative structures in context. Following is the proposed revised scale of activation:

highly active (where the open proposition is explicitly stated in previous conversation)

active (where the open proposition is in the hearer’s focus of consciousness)

accessible: (where the open proposition is implied or inferable from context)

inactive: (the open proposition is unexplored and unrelated to the current context)

The breakdown of accessibility into 3 sub-types as implemented by Lambrecht is not utilized in this analysis since it clouds perception of a potential continuum.

4.5.4 Sample Information Structure Analyses of Tokens

This section gives a sample information structure analysis for three types of structures. In the socio-stylistic section of this chapter, I hypothesized that pragmatics play a role in the choice among interrogatives for the most common (most frequent) structures in the Barnes-Blyth Corpus. Staying consistent with that hypothesis, this Information Structure Analysis is limited to these structures: 1) Q proV, 2) proV Q, and 3) Q. The descriptive mechanism is illustrated in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4

Context: the token from the corpus with preceeding and following utterances
Information Structure:
Presuppositions:
 1) KP: open proposition with variable x is K-presupposed
 2) CP of KP: highly active, active, accessible or inactive
Alloquestions: syntactically divergent yet propositionally identical structures evaluated for pragmatic acceptability
 #=pragmatically unacceptable
 ?= questionable

In each case, the alloquestions chosen are limited to the other two most frequent structures in the corpus.

To begin, example 4.31 contains a Q proV structure:

Example 4.31

- B. Moi, les parents de Scott, mon mari, sont baptistes
 E. Sont baptistes? Ah oui? **Alors comment ça se passe?** /laugh/
 B. Elle est, ils habitent à la campagne, dans le sud de l'Indiana, et ils mais, pff son père, buvait beaucoup /laugh/ euh il a arrêté pour des raisons de santé, mais il fumait aussi

Information Structure:

Presuppositions:

- 1) KP: your in-laws being Baptist happens in x way (for x reason)
- 2) CP of KP: inactive

Minimal Pairs:

- a) #comment?
- b) ça se passe comment?

The first alloquestion, a Q structure in this context but would be interpreted generally as ‘what?!’ rather than specifically “how is it that they are Baptists?” Additionally, any component that is not active in this context cannot be omitted. In contrast, the proV Q structure is acceptable yet creates an unlikely (and infrequent) case where an inactive CP of KP is found in the *in situ* structure rather than in a fronted structure.

Compare the previous example with Example 4.32 containing a proV Q structure:

Example 4.32

- M. Et quand je parle de poinçon à la femme
 E. Tu as rien vu? Et dans le décor
 M. elle sait même pas de quoi je parle.
 C. Ah bon?
 M. Non, on a cherché, on a cherché et
 E. Et comment ça se dit poinçon éventuellement? Vous avez trouvé un équivalent?
 M. Non euh
 E. Non? Parce que je sais pas du tout comment on peut dire ça. Peut-être que ça se, je sais pas. Ben alors comment ils reconnaissent, les pourcentages?
 M. Ben moi j'ai regardé sur euh, j'ai j'ai un bijou en or
 E. C'est curieux.
 M. en or, que mes beaux parent m'ont offert
 E. Ouais
 M. je l'ai cherché, je l'ai jamais trouvé.
 E. Tiens, c'est curieux, ça!
 M. /inaudible/ je t'assure un bijou /inaudible/ ils ont dû se ruiner!
 C. Alors le poinçon pour l'argent c'est pas le même que pour l'or, hein!
 E. Non, c'est différent.
 C. **Mm Le poinçon d'argent c'est comment?**
 E. Euh je sais plus.

Information Structure:**Presuppositions:**

- 1) KP: silver stamp is x like
- 2) CP of KP: highly active

Minimal Pairs:

- a) # comment?
- b) # le poinçon d'argent, comment?
- c) ? le poinçon d'argent, comment c'est?

The first alloquestion, a Q structure is a questionable variant in this context thanks to the highly active evaluation of the CP of the KP. Yet, if not the fixed interrogative “what?” the interpretation would likely be “how is it different?” rather than specifically “what is silver stamp like?” It is hypothesized that the proV Q structure is chosen here due to the information structure evaluation; the CP of the KP is highly active. The question word *comment* is also *expected*, a concept that is developed in Section 4.6.3. The Q proV structure, which is the preferred structure for the question word *comment* is inappropriate in this context due to its stronger associations with inactive CP of KP.

Finally, consider Example 4.33, illustrating a Q alone structure:

Example 4.33

- C. Tu prends le bus, tu prends le bus numéro 6
 E. Numéro 6 et tu t'arrêtes
 C. Dans le /inaudible/ de la fac
 E. Oui
 C. et tu t'arrêtes euh à Hennepin
 E. Tu continues
 C. ou je sais pas quoi là ou
 E. Oui euh
 C. la station d'après
 E. Non! C'est pas enc c'est pas encore Hennepin! C'est
 C. Où? Avant?
 E. Avant. Tu t'arrêtes avant et

Information Structure:**Presuppositions:**

- 1) KP: you get off at x place/station

2) CP of KP: highly active

Minimal Pairs:

a) c'est où?

b) #où c'est?

In this context, the CP of the KP is highly active. In such a context, the Q alone or the proV Q structures are most appropriate. The participants have been jointly talking about the directions to and location of a certain place. The topic is well established and the goal of the conversation is well understood. The repetition of the VP in this context appears redundant.

4.5.5 Activation of open proposition: totals and generalizations

The analysis exemplified in Section 4.5.4 was systematically applied to all tokens of Qpro V, proV Q and Q in the Barnes-Blyth Corpus. Table 4.11 displays the CP evaluation of the KP for these three categories according to question expression. It is important to point out that only those WH-interrogative tokens that could possibly be expressed by some other structure in another context can be taken into account.

Table 4.11

Q proV	Highly Active	Active	Accessible	Inactive
<i>Où</i>	0	0	1	0
<i>Quand</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>combien</i>	0	0	2	0
<i>comment</i>	1	2	9	18
<i>pourquoi</i>	0	2	9	4
<i>quesque</i>	1	11	16	18
<i>qui</i>	1	0	1	1
<i>quel N</i>	0	2	0	2
<i>lequel</i>	0	0	1	0
TOTALS	3	17	39	43

proV Q	Highly Active	Active	Accessible	Inactive
<i>où</i>	0	2	9	2
<i>quand</i>	0	1	3	0
<i>combien</i>	1	0	2	0
<i>comment</i>	1	0	1	0
<i>pourquoi</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>quoi</i>	5	3	15	4
<i>qui</i>	0	0	1	0
<i>quel N</i>	0	0	7	0
<i>lequel</i>	1	0	0	0
TOTALS	8	6	38	6

Q	Highly Active	Active	Accessible	Inactive
<i>où</i>	2	0	0	0
<i>quand</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>combien</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>comment</i>	0	0	1	4
<i>pourquoi</i>	0	2	2	3
<i>quoi</i>	0	1	0	2
<i>qui</i>	1	0	0	0
<i>quel N</i>	0	2	4	1
<i>lequel</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
TOTALS	3	5	7	10

What are the apparent differences in information structure packaging between the structures? The trends apparent in Table 4.11 are cautiously presented due to an imbalance in token frequency. Overall, there are no clean and definitive differences in activation. Nevertheless there are promising tendencies apparent in the data. Fronted Q structures are weighted on the Inactive end of the scale whereas the *in situ* structure has the most Highly Active open propositions. The Q alone results are surprising since by the very nature of the structure, it would be predicted that there would be more Highly Active utterances than inactive. The results are partially skewed due to the high frequency of the question words *pourquoi* and *comment*, the latter used in the sense “what did you say?”

A WH-question in the Q-alone structure, when used as a true interlocutor-addressed question, has a highly active open proposition.

4.5.6 Discussion and Conclusion

Several difficulties arose in this analysis. It is not always clear how to judge the activation status of the open proposition. The accessibility categories are also hard to standardize. A particularly problematic situation is where the VP is active but the question expression is not. This context is discussed in Section 4.5.3. Instead of judging the open proposition as a whole, it may be helpful to analyze the data based on its constituent parts: the activation state of the VP alone, the expectedness of the Question Word or the Sentence minus QU (activation status). Cheng and Rooryck (2000) claim that for WH- *in situ*, the presupposition involves the entire VP. According to Lambrecht and Michaelis, the focus of a WH-question is the Question Word. Could focal position be a helpful tool in this analysis? See 4.6.2 for further exploration of this issue.

Dislocation has been shown to play a role in topic acceptability (Lambrecht 1981). What role, if any, does dislocation play in the information structure specific to

interrogatives? Do interrogatives with dislocated elements appear more often with certain structures? Indeed, according to the data in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, if there is dislocation associated with a WH-interrogative in this corpus, then it is most likely Right Dislocation. WH-interrogatives and Left Dislocation are an unlikely but not impossible pairing. This particular observation has a possible explanation in terms of processing; it is harder to process a question about a relatively inaccessible referent.

A final proposal for further investigation involves looking back at the central tenets of information structure. An important pragmatic concept is that in an utterance old or given information tends to precede new information. When the question word, which is (labeled as) the focus, appears in COMP position, the new information precedes the old information. In contrast, when the question word appears *in situ*, it appears after the old information. The issue at hand is whether or not this given-new preferred structure applies to interrogatives.

4.6 PRAGMATIC FACTORS

This section continues and expands upon the discussion in 4.4 on the role of information structure and pragmatics in determining the choice of interrogative structures in Spoken French. Since information structure alone does not complete our understanding of the phenomenon, I look to well-known as well as original pragmatic concepts to clarify the use of interrogatives.

4.6.1 Deixis

Lambrecht (1994) discusses a bipartite model of the universe of discourse: the text-external world and the text-internal world. Elements of the text-external world may be incorporated into conversation without previously given discourse representations. Instead speakers use deictic expressions to directly designate text-external elements (p.

38). In the case of interrogatives, a common deictic question is “What is this/that?” Most interrogatives in the corpus do not involve this deictic function. However, the form used to express deixis is of interest. In Example 4.34, Martine asks a deictic “What is that?” unexpectedly, especially since the previous conversation had been about French eating and drinking habits.

Example 4.34

- M. **Qu'est-ce que c'est?**
 E. Euh, un article sur j'ai pas le temps de le lire.

Martine's question points to the text-external world by using a fronted interrogative. The next passage (Example 4.35) contains many tokens of non-interrogative and interrogative deixis. The participants are looking at a nature book or magazine presumably on Betsy's coffee table.

Example 4.35

- C. y a de belles photos dans ce
 B. Oui, c'est ce que nous regardons, surtout les photos.
 C. Oui.
 B. Mais y a des articles intéressants aussi.
 E. **Oh qu'est-ce que c'est que ça**
 /laughs/
 E. Ça vous ennuie te, de voir travailler /inaudible/
 B. C'est qui /inaudible/
 C. Ça c'est rigolo alors!
 M. **Qu'est-ce que c'est?**
 C. Un oiseau, tu sais, tu sais que les animaux, quand quand quand euh, quand ils sentent qu'ils vont être euh qu'y a le l'oiseau de proie ou quoi que ce soit qui vient, euh les prendre et les manger, ils ont une certaine défense quoi plus ou moins

The first interrogative is not a frequently observed structure in the current study, but it is clearly a construction chosen for its deictic function. The second deictic question uttered by Martine is similar to the utterance in Example 4.34 since it uses the same fronted form to ask “What is that?” referring to a picture of a bird in the magazine. The

fronted structure in deictic interrogatives carries a notion of surprise or shock. It may also be the case that the *qu'est-ce que c'est* expression is a significant part of Martine's idiolect.

Deictic interrogatives are not restricted to fronted structures. In Example 4.36, the entire passage is an incorporation of the text-external world into the text-internal world.

Example 4.36

- C. **Comment ça s'appelle, ce meuble-là, déjà?** Le meuble tu vois
 E. C'est dos d'âne.
 C. Un un secrétaire dos d'âne?
 E. Secrétaire dos d'âne.
 M. Oui, évidemment, évidemment, dos d'âne.
 C. **C'est quoi, ça?**
 E. Ah ça c'est pour le rabattre.
 M. C'est une clé, ça. C'est là que y a les diamants /laugh, sigh/
 E. C'est pour, c'est pour rabattre
 C. Ah!! Ah oui!
 M. Ah c'est pas mal, ça!

Christine first asked about the name of a piece of furniture in the room with a fronted structure (consistent with trends for the question word *comment*). However her follow-up question asking about a particular item (a key), which she can't identify is formulated as a proV Q structure. See Chapter 5 (Section 5.6) for further discussion on direct object interrogatives.

4.6.2 Relevance

In this section, I incorporate the Theory of Relevance as proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986) into the analysis of interrogatives. The authors define relevance as follows: *an assumption is relevant in a context if and only if it has some contextual effect in that context* (p.122). In the case of interrogatives, the relevance of the question and the

question word are potentially useful for the analysis. The authors define a relevant question as follows (p. 207): a question the answer to which is certain or likely to be relevant. They state:

Relevance...is a two-place relation: what is relevant to one person may not be relevant to another. Thus, in interpreting a question, the hearer must always make some assumption about who the speaker thinks its answer would be relevant to. Different assumptions yield different types of question...Regular requests for information...are analysable as questions whose answers the speaker regards as relevant to her, and believes, moreover, that the hearer might be in a position to supply (pp252-253).

Given Sperber and Wilson's proposal that relevance of a question may be judged based on the relevance of the answer, I evaluate the interrogatives in the Barnes-Blyth Corpus according to the following scale: highly relevant, relevant, accessibly relevant, and irrelevant. This particular scale was chosen to mirror the information structure analysis of Section 4.5.5. Table 4.12 illustrates the relevance totals for the three most common structures in the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

Table 4.12 Relevancy totals per structure and question expression

Q proV	Highly Relevant	Relevant	Accessibly Relevant	Irrelevant
<i>où</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>quand</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>combien</i>	1	1	0	0
<i>comment</i>	1	6	21	1
<i>pourquoi</i>	0	2	13	0
<i>quesque</i>	4	14	18	11
<i>qui</i>	0	2	1	0
<i>quel N</i>	0	1	2	1
<i>lequel</i>	0	1	0	0
TOTALS	6	28	55	13

proV Q	Highly Relevant	Relevant	Accessibly Relevant	Irrelevant
<i>où</i>	0	7	6	0
<i>quand</i>	0	3	1	0
<i>combien</i>	1	1	1	0
<i>comment</i>	1	1	0	0
<i>pourquoi</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>quoi</i>	6	9	10	2
<i>qui</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>quel N</i>	0	7	0	0
<i>lequel</i>	1	0	0	0
TOTALS	9	29	18	2

Q	Highly Relevant	Relevant	Accessibly Relevant	Irrelevant
<i>où</i>	2	0	0	0
<i>quand</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>combien</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>comment</i>	0	0	5	0
<i>pourquoi</i>	0	2	2	3
<i>quoi</i>	0	1	0	2
<i>qui</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>quel N</i>	0	4	2	1
<i>lequel</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
TOTALS	2	8	9	6

Once again, due to the imbalance among the structures, any observations must be made guardedly. Nevertheless, as can be seen in Table 4.12, the Q proV category is more heavily weighted on the irrelevant end of the scale than proV Q. This pattern parallels the activation results seen in the Information Structure discussion above. The few tokens of the Q structure are rather evenly spread out on the scale. As a general rule, avoidance of irrelevance is not a shocking finding since irrelevant utterances are not felicitous. Although the category of Relevance as defined above does not greatly help to distinguish among the interrogative structures, there are visible trends and the scale may prove to be a useful tool in a study with more tokens.

4.6.3 Expectedness of question expression

The Information Structure concepts of activation and informativeness overlook a subtlety: how has the context paved the way for an interrogative with one question expression over another? This section defines a new pragmatic concept called *expectedness* as related to the question word. In short, the concept states that a highly expected question expression tends to appear *in situ*.

Expectedness for instance evaluates the anticipation for a ‘when’ versus ‘how much’ question. For example, if we are talking about how expensive dresses are, then a ‘how much’ question is highly expected etc. First, as a point of discussion, in Example 4.37, the S+V portion of the utterance is active plus the question expression *combien* is highly expected due to the discussion of price in the previous utterance:

Example 4.37

- C. Oui mais alors ma chambre elle était toute petite, pour le pour le prix que je payais.
- E. **Tu payais combien alors?**
- C. Je payais 175 dollars et into and too utilities not included.

However, there are clearly cases where the S + V are active but the question word is less expected. What if for instance in the interrogative the question expression were *quand* instead of *combien*? The informativeness and activation of S + V remains the same, but the expectedness rating is entirely different.

Example 4.37'

- C. Oui mais alors ma chambre elle était toute petite, pour le pour le prix que je payais.
- E. **#Tu payais quand alors?**
- C. Je payais 175 dollars et into and too utilities not included.

In the manipulated example 4.37', the expectedness of the question word *quand* is very low.

It is observed that unexpected question words are found in COMP rather than *in situ*. Expectedness may help explain the surprising (in terms of frequency) appearance of a fronted *où* in the Example 4.38.

Example 4.38

- C. Si, moi je l'ai, mais à la maison, je l'ai
- B. Moi je l'ai
- C. puis je l'ai regardé tellement /inaudible/
- M. **Merci, merci, où vous avez eu ça?**
- B. Euh c'est Joyce, qui l'avait distribué, à tout le monde

The expectedness principle would predict an unexpected question word to appear pre-verbally *Où vous avez eu ça?* rather than post-verbally *#Vous avez eu ça où?* The *in situ* alloquestion is avoided since the question word *où* is unexpected in this context.

4.6.4 Answerability

In this section I introduce the concept that I have labeled *answerability* as a tool for understanding interrogative choice. Essentially, answerability characterizes the

speaker's view on the possibility, ease and conciseness of the reply to a particular question. I claim that more answerable questions have a tendency to use the *in situ* form. The notion of answerability helps explain both the trends for certain question expressions to consistently appear either in Q proV or proV Q (inherent answerability) and contextual answerability where the environment determines placement of the question expression.

4.6.4.1 Question-Answer Pairs

This section briefly presents several views that support involving the role of the answer in the construction of a question. There is widespread and cross-linguistic acceptance of the distinction between yes-no questions and WH-questions. They differentiate themselves based on the kind of answer expected from the question. This idea regarding the type of answer required is based on the form of the question: a yes-no question distinguishes itself from a WH-question by a lack of WH-word. This section of the dissertation extends the argument such that WH-question variation may be explained based on the attributes of the answer.

Anscombe and Ducrot (1976) acknowledge, in addition to the exchange of information, the organizational work accomplished in communication: “il est constitutif du sens d'un énoncé de prétendre orienter la suite du dialogue” (p. 14). Diller (1984), in her pragmatic study of the question-answer couple in French argues strongly for the questions and answers to be analyzed as a unit rather than as separate entities. According to her point of view, “*le questionneur se donne comme s'orientant intentionnellement vers ce qui va suivre et oblige le destinataire à se tenir compte de cette orientation*” (p. 20).

Studies in the disciplines of pragmatics and semantics weigh this relationship between questions and answers. A concept often discussed in relation to questions and answers is the adjacency pair. Schegloff & Sachs (1973) define adjacency pairs

according to the following criteria: they are adjacent, produced by different speakers, ordered as having a first part and second part and typed, or categorized according to the type of second part required. In their seminal work, Katz and Postal (1964) work from the basis that questions and answers are semantically connected. Mittwoch (1979) claims that a question presupposes that there is an answer. Engdahl (2006) in her paper on information packaging in questions claims: “the way that questions are realized is rather systematically correlated with the speaker’s view of what the hearer might know and what has happened so far in the conversation” (p. 1).

Engdahl (2006) discusses a topic related to relevance in relation to question structure. She relies on the concept of Questions Under Discussion (QUD) which is a set of currently discussable issues: “if a question is maximal in QUD, it is permissible to provide any information specific to q using (optionally) a short answer” (p. 3).

In contrast to many of the analyses mentioned above, the concept of answerability is not concerned with the answer *per se*, instead answerability involves what the speaker predicts the second part of the adjacency pair will/can be.

4.6.4.2 Components of Answerability

Context aside, there is an intuitive difference among question words. ‘Where’, ‘How many’ and ‘when’ require little complexity in regards to their answerability. In contrast, ‘how’ and ‘why’ require philosophically, syntactically and semantically more complex responses. For example, potential answers to ‘where’ could include ‘at home’, ‘here’, ‘6th Street’ etc; ‘how many’ could be answered by ‘five’, ‘a lot’ etc and ‘when’ could elicit ‘later’, ‘at 6 o’clock’ or ‘last summer’. In contrast, ‘how’ could be followed by ‘with my front teeth’ or ‘by following the directions’ and ‘why’ elicits ‘because I

forgot my dictionary’ or ‘I didn’t know his name’. Of course, an answer to ‘how’ could also be a simple adverb such as ‘carefully’.

As seen in Section 4.3, this division of ‘where’, ‘how many’ and ‘when’ (lower modifiers) on the one hand and ‘how’ and ‘why’ (higher modifiers) on the other appears in distribution patterns for WH-questions in spoken French. The former group has a preference for the *in situ* position whereas the latter has a preference for initial position. In fact, the most abstract question word, ‘why’ is the most restricted in terms of the number of positions/structures in which it can participate. The least restricted question word appears to be ‘what’. Context aside, ‘what’ would seem to fit in the more answerable category. However in Spoken French, ‘what’ displays no preference for either initial or *in situ* position. Upon examination of the contexts involved in fronted vs *in situ* ‘what’ in French, there appears a pattern where the more answerable ‘whats’ are *in situ* whereas those that require an explanation are fronted.

Coveney focuses on explaining why rhetorical questions disprefer the *in situ* structure; but what about interlocutor-addressed questions? After all, the overwhelming majority of all questions, including *in situ* questions, are interlocutor-addressed questions. This section discusses how the concept of answerability helps elucidate the contextual use of the *in situ* structure for interlocutor-addressed questions. The hypothesis is that the *in situ* structure is associated with a high degree of answerability. This idea is consistent with Coveney’s claim that low expectations of answerability avoid the *in situ* structure.

The first overarching component of answerability appears obvious, yet is difficult to accurately quantify or exemplify: A highly answerable question is one in which the speaker believes the listener is able to (easily) answer the question. This first component of high answerability demonstrates the connection between *in situ* interrogatives used for echo questions and those used for true interlocutor-addressed questions. In an echo

question, the speaker knows without doubt that the listener is able to answer the question since the answer was just previously uttered.

In the interaction illustrated in Example 4.39, E knows that B can answer her question (line 5) about handball in the U.S. because of B's assertion (line 1) that handball is something different in the U.S.

Example 4.39

- 1.B. Le, hand-ball, c'est autre chose, ici!
- 2.M. Ici c'est autre chose?
- 3.E. Ah bon?
- 4.M. Oui, ça je savais!
- 5.E. **Alors c'est quoi?**
- 6.B. C'est comme euh racket ball, mais avec les mains

Contrast the high answerability seen in 4.39 with Example 4.40 where the speaker is not sure if the listener can answer. She indicates this lack of certainty by continuing her initial question with a question determining her ability to answer. Note the use of a fronted question structure in this case.

Example 4.40

- 1.E. Et **comment ça se dit poinçon éventuellement?** Vous avez trouvé un équivalent?
- 2.M. Non euh

Another display of high answerability is the case when the speaker follows an initial information question with yes-no questions containing potential and likely answers to the question. These follow-up questions unlike the follow-up question in those seen in 4.40 display the speaker's belief about not only the possibility of answering the question but also the subset of likely answers. In Example 4.41 the speaker follows an initial "where is it?" with a yes-no question containing a possible answer:

Example 4.41

- 1.E. C'est, **c'est où?** C'est c'est en ta mâchoire inférieure?

A final heuristic for determining answerability is proposed in terms of the syntactic complexity required for a response. In other words, a highly answerable question requires a syntactically simple clause whereas a less answerable question requires a syntactically complex clause (or two). In Example 4.42 there is a question-answer pair where the speaker asks the listener what she uses for her recipe. The answer is a simple SVC but could have been represented by just the complement as well.

Example 4.42

- 1.M. **Tu prends quoi?**
2.C. Je prends du bacon...

It has been observed that the question word *pourquoi* ('why') avoids the *in situ* position. A possible explanation could be low answerability. A 'why' question often requires a dependent clause in the answer. Contrast the syntactic simplicity of 4.42 with Example 4.43 where this less answerable question is uttered with a fronted structure.

Example 4.43

- 1.M. **Et pourquoi tu en as pas toi?**
2.E. Ben, parce que je suis pas sage

Examples 4.42 and 4.43 display two types of answerability relevant to this discussion: inherent and contextual. Inherent answerability is tied to the identity of the question expression itself. In other words, the question word *pourquoi* is inherently less answerable than *où*. In contrast, interrogatives involving question expressions like *quesque* and *quoi* call into play contextual answerability since the answerability evaluation varies according to environment.

4.6.5 Summary and Conclusion

Section 4.6 first evaluated the potential roles of two well-established pragmatic concepts, deixis and relevance in understanding interrogatives. Their contributions to insight on variation and choice are explicable but not significant. In contrast, two pragmatic concepts were formulated and explained according to their function in elucidating interrogative choice.

The concept of expectedness was formulated in response to a need for a means of analyzing the contextual evaluation of the question expression in interaction. Expectedness serves to strengthen the work of Information Structure in understanding interrogative choice. The proposed analysis in terms of answerability seeks to explain the placement of the question word in Spoken French with a comprehensive, intuitive, yet observable tendency. This analysis improves on Coveney's initial work both by looking at the use rather than the avoidance of the structure and by re-articulating his idea of answerability in the context of interlocutor-addressed questions. Answerability allows for a general understanding of question word placement in French without resorting to rules and exceptions.

Answerability is by no means a panacea. Indicators of answerability, such as providing possible answers, which would according to the theory be compatible with an *in situ* structure are also found with fronted structures as in this interaction:

Example 4.44

- M. C'était un poème pour Mr. Conley. Il fallait écrire
B. Oui
M. soit un sonnet, soit un rondeau, enfin avec une forme fixe.
E. Qu'est-ce que vous avez écrit? Sonnet?
C. /inaudible/ rondeau.
M. On a choisi rondeau, on a choisi rondeau, hein, c'est

In addition, a major exception to these answerability tendencies is the *comment* question that is involved in naming/saying. These are typically highly answerable questions with a fronted question word. However, these questions are unexpected.

In conclusion, although pragmatic factors alone cannot account for interrogative variation, nevertheless they provide significant insight for understanding fronted versus *in situ* variation.

4.7 PHONO-SYNTACTIC FACTORS

In this section, I discuss several factors related to phonology and syntax such as End-Weight as proposed by Coveney (1995, 2002) in an effort to explain interrogative variation. I broaden the discussion by taking a more in depth look at the post-verbal position in interrogatives.

4.7.1 End-Weight

Coveney (1995, 2002) posits the hypothesis of End-Weight as a factor influencing the choice between fronted and *in situ* interrogative structures, which he calls SVQ. His hypothesis is as follows “That, in accordance with the principle of End-Weight, the longer the QU element, the greater will be the tendency to use SVQ rather than a QU-fronted structure” (1995, p.149). Indeed by counting syllables involved in the SVC component in contrast with the Question component, he found that “the shorter the SVC, and the longer the QU element, the greater is the frequency of use of the SVQ structure” (1995, p. 158). However, according to his 2002 results, he claims that the End-Weight effect was not as important as hypothesized.

The theory of End-Weight could potentially be relevant regarding the placement of the long question expression prep+quel+N. In the Barnes-Blyth corpus, there are 9 cases of the question expression=prep+quel+N. There is no way to make statistical

claims with such small numbers, however it is interesting to note that 5 are post-verbal and 4 are fronted. All nine tokens are exemplified below. Note that Example 4.49 is a repetition of Example 4.48 since it was not initially acknowledged.

Examples 4.45-4.49 ProV Q where Q= prep+quel+N

- M. Mm et ça c'est à quel sujet?
- C. Tu l'as passé en quelle année?
- M. Ha ben dis donc, c'est sur dans quel auteur?
- M. Tu vas le faire avec quel professeur?
- M. Tu vas le faire avec quel professeur? (repeated later)

Examples 4.50-4.53 Q proV where Q=prep+quel+N

- M. A quelle heure vous avez été?
- M. Mais les dents de sagesse, à quel âge ça pousse?
- C. Mais à quelle heure vous devez être là-bas?
- C. A quelle heure vous devez partir?

End-Weight could potentially account for the post-verbal *tu vas le faire avec quel professeur?* versus *avec quel professeur tu vas le faire?*. Note that all four fronted structures involve the preposition *à* and for three of them the N is *heure*. It is hypothesized that fronted *à quelle heure* is a fixed interrogative construction.

By extension of the End-Weight principle, question expressions with prepositions should be more likely to surface in the post-verbal position since they are heavier than those without prepositions. Indeed, almost all question words with prepositions occur in the proV (prep) Q structure. The few exceptions are for the question words *(le)quel* (seen above) and *qui*. In contrast, the End-Weight proposal is inconsistent with the fact that the two longest question words *comment* and *pourquoi* are usually in a pre-verbal position whereas the lighter question words are found in post-verbal position.

As can be seen in the above discussion, the concept of End-Weight is a potentially attractive but as of yet indeterminate contributor to the understanding of interrogative variation.

4.7.2 Focus position, XP slot and argument structure

This section discusses the possibility of a phono-syntactic explanation for the observations made concerning the proV Q structure. In observing the trends seen thus far in Chapter 4, a particular question emerges: why is the *in situ* form preferred in cases of highly presupposed, highly expected and highly answerable questions? The *in situ* interrogative structure is syntactically similar to its affirmative counterpart. In other words, the syntax resembles pro+V+X where X is the focus. This particular idea is related to the answerability component of syntactic complexity. Echo questions affect syntax since they mimic the previous sentence in form. I hypothesize that the more succinct X is in its focal interrogative form or its answer, the more likely it is to appear in the *in situ* position. Example 4.54 illustrates a context where the syntax is the following: C'est X place? C'est X? Non, C'est à X.

Example 4.54

- M. Parce que moi j'aime beaucoup En Attendant Godot.
E. C'est où? C'est Guthrie?
M. Non.
C. Non, c'est à St Paul.

To contrast, consider the next interaction where the potential X slot is filled by an interrogative expression or its answer is not succinct. In addition, the X slot is filled by a direct object “*yogurt*” in this particular case.

Example 4.55

- E. Mais le .. ça ça m'étonne que ce soit si cher, les yogurts. Je ø parle pas des autres fromages, mais /inaudible/
M. Tu dis yogurt?
E. Oui.
M. Tu dis pas yaourts?
E. Non. /soft chuckle/
M. Comment tu dis toi?
C. Yaourt. Yaourt et yogurt c'est /inaudible/
M. **Alors pourquoi tu dis yogurt toi?**
C. Parce que en anglais c'est yogurt! Et /inaudible/
E. Parce que on, j'ai toujours dit, j'ai toujours dit ça, même à la maison, en France
C. Ah bon.
E. on dit yogurt.

It is also relevant to explore explanations for the WH word patterning based on verb argument structure. Bolinger (1978) claims that in English, “how” and “why” are less acceptable than other WH words for the end position based on the loose connection between the verb and the complement. His observation holds equally well for French. The question word *pourquoi* is never the argument of a predicate. Therefore this question word as well as *comment* (which can be an argument or an adjunct) are the least syntactically necessary of all the question words. In other words, there is a potential post-verbal position for question words that are essentially arguments but not one for question words that are adjuncts.

In the present chapter, I work according to the claim that the pragmatic focus is always the question word in WH interrogatives as articulated by Lambrecht and Michaelis (1998). From this particular assumption, since the question expression can be in COMP, it follows that there is not always stress on the focal element of the interrogative since the phonology of French requires phrase final stress. How does the power of focus position influence the placement of WH words? Does the position strongly disprefer semantically empty constituents? The *in situ* structure permits

alignment of the stress and focus relationship. Placing the stress on a focal element seems to be highly desirable especially when the other element of the utterance is *c'est*. Perhaps this explains why there are no instances of *où est-ce que c'est?*, *quand est-ce que c'est?*, or *où c'est*, *quand c'est* etc. in the corpus. The potential of the focal position factor in interrogative analysis could be strengthened by a prosodic analysis in line with the work of Nilsenová (2006) who examined the meaning of intonation in interrogatives.

4.7.3 Structural Redundancy/Complexity

The most common structures in the corpus are the least redundant and the least complex: proV Q, Q proV and Q. Clefted structures with *est-ce que* or *c'est* add a level of syntactic complexity to the interrogative. The recursive structures add a level of redundancy as well as complexity. In the Barnes-Blyth corpus, redundancy or complexity found when required for a communicative purpose such as question marking. Adding unnecessary structure is avoided. This particular factor is related to the concept of questionness introduced earlier in this chapter. For example, the structure Q esq proV is not well represented in the corpus. This particular structure is syntactically complex and redundant since it involves a fronted question word in COMP, followed by a question morpheme (redundancy). Consider the complex interrogative in Example 4.56:

Example 4.56

- E. je m'en suis déjà bien aperçue], j'en avais déjà parlé, on m'a dit non non, c'est pas un précédent, oh vous vous trompez!
- M. **Comment est-ce que ça se passe ce TA deux?** Euh parce qu'on nous a demandé, sur une feuille, pour l'année prochaine, si on voulait enseigner, quel niv, non on n'a pas demandé le niveau, euh pour le, l'été seulement, je crois on a demandé le niveau, mais euh, si on voulait être TA deux.
- E. Mm

In Example 4.56, the syntactic complexity and interrogative redundancy is helpful since the question is extremely long and convoluted.

Desan (1983) discusses interrogatives in relation to their evolution towards economy. He looks at French interrogatives within the general tendency for all of French to keep the SVO word order. The first efforts to keep the SVO word order in French in the 16th century relied upon *est-ce que*, which marks interrogativity a second time. The principle of economy led to these progressions: *Où est-ce qu'on va* => *Où c'est qu'on va* => *Où qu'on va* => *Où on va* / *On va où* (p. 44).

In analyzing the proV? structure for yes-no questions, he points out that the listener does not know that he/she needs to answer until the end of the utterance (at the melodic high end of the contour). He believes this melodic strategy reinforces the chance of being answered. This particular structure is the most economic and least redundant of yes-no questions and therefore a parallel could be made with the proV Q structure since the Q element, like the high pitch, is the last element of the interrogative. Indeed, the Q proV structure is also economic but more redundant due to the position of the question expression. “*Si le locuteur pose une question, il doit s’assurer qu’il obtiendra une réponse...Maximiser la probabilité de réponse fait partie intégrante de cette théorie de l’économie*” (p. 44). This theory of economy then is closely related to the theory of answerability.

4.7.4 Conclusion

This section examined the potential of phono-syntactic factors of End-Weight, iconicity, focal position and syntactic complexity in the choice of interrogative structure. In several cases, the phono-syntactic factors are closely tied to other parameters already discussed in this chapter. This expository examination of the contribution of these factors concludes with more questions than answers at this point, but indicates promising avenues of future research.

4.8 PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

In this section, I identify several potentially significant aspects of psycholinguistics that affect the choice of interrogative structure.

4.8.1 Planning

Coveney (1995) tests the hypothesis that the proV Q form is a direct result of lack of planning on the part of the speaker. In other words, the question word is post-verbal because the speaker wasn't prepared enough to place it in COMP position. He tested this hypothesis by examining the silence or filled pauses of speakers in their interrogatives and concluded that lack of planning and *in situ* use were not related. This is not to say that situations involving planning and use of proV Q are not compatible. In Example 4.57 Christine uses the proV Q structure after several empty expressions to hold the floor.

Example 4.57

- M. Voilà c'est passé /laughs/ .. Tu me l'as soufflé /laughs/ Mais on fait que répéter /laughs/
C. Oh la la! Non, **mais c'est quoi**, c'est joli quoi!
M. Tu tu vas les emporter, c'est ça! /laugh/ Ça va disparaître!

Christine's question undeniably combines hesitation (a lack of planning) with the *in situ* structure, but this does not necessarily indicate a causal relationship.

4.8.2 Activation duration

In Section 4.4 the concept of activation of the open proposition and its effect on WH-expression placement in interrogatives was analyzed. On a larger scale, the following questions inspired by Chafe (1976) arise: Does activation depend on time and space? How recently does a topic/open proposition need to be discussed for it to continue to be active? When does it change to accessible? The very long extract that follows is provided in order to examine the above questions. At the end of this passage,

there is an interrogative, “what time do you need to leave?” (line 128) referring back to the information discussed at the very beginning concerning the researcher’s need to be at Dinky Town shortly after the recording session for choir rehearsal (lines 1-23).

Example 4.58

- 1.M. Mais vous deviez partir, vous à Dinky Town!
- 2.B. oh ça ne fait rien!
Peut-être là euh le temps qui, qu'il arrive il /inaudible/
- 3.E. Alors moi, peut-être, peut-être /inaudible/ Oh ben non, on attend .. oui
- 4.M. Oui mais si, Madame Barnes doit être
- 5.E. Oui c'est
- 6.M. quelque part à une certaine heure, vous savez.
- 7.B. C'est pas grave /laugh/
- 8.M. On peut très bien attendre euh, Georges
- 9.B. Mais non
- 10.M. ailleurs.
- 11.B. Non non non.
- 12.E. Ben oui.
- 13.M. A Dinky Town ou, je sais pas moi.
- 14.B. Non euh c'est
- 15.M. Ou à Hennepin Avenue! /laugh/
- 16.E. Downtown, c'est ça avec des /inaudible, laugh, inaudible/
- 17.B. Non, c'est pas grave, si j'arrive en retard, ça, ça continue /inaudible/
- 18.C. Bon, ben d'accord, on t'attend.
- 19.M. Ah là c'est de la chorale, là où vous allez ce soir.
- 20.C. OK, à toute à l'heure, hein. Bye!
- 21.B. /laugh/
- 22.E. Bye bye!
- 23.B. Ça va?
- 24.C. C'est quoi qu'on, on voit pas dans la nuit?
- 25.M. Si! Si! C'est vert!
- 26.E. Si, les numéros.
- 27.M. C'est phosphorescent
- 28.C. Ah! Vous voyez. Oh ! Mais c'est bien ça! /laugh/
- 29.E. Attends, je vais voir! /laugh/ Oh oui, alors là, hein /laughs, inaudible/ C'est la technique, hein! /laughs/
- 30.C. Tu sais et, et puis c'est bien, quoi. C'est mieux que le téléphone, phosphorescent /imitates clinking noises/
- 31.E. Ça c'est drôle
- 32.M. Elle appelle le japon là, la Chine /chuckle/ Non mais à t'amu, en s'amusant comme ça à faire des, des des numéros des fois, on /inaudible/

33.E. /inaudible/
 34.M. et al /laugh/
 35.C. Ben alors il arrive euh dans 20 minutes, hein
 36.B. Bon, très bien. Tu as encore soif?
 37.C. Non.
 38.E. Nous avons
 39.C. Moins dix!
 40.B. Assez bu et .. /inaudible/
 41.C. Ah moi, j'ai, plus rien, hein, moi je je, ouais je. Même certain
 42.M. Certains ont l'air d'avoir trop bu, même.
 43.B. Tu veux un café? /chortle/
 44.E. Non, ça va l'exciter! /chuckle/
 45.C. Non non non. Je ne bois pas /inaudible/
 46.B. Je range
 (pause) /throat clearing/
 47.M. C'est du syrop tout ça! Cirer
 48.E. Alors c'est la neige, c'est la neige
 49.M. les chaussures! /chuckle/
 50.E. C'est la neige, dis, tu sais c'est du, c'est du sel
 51.M. /inaudible/
 52.E. ça part plus, ça part plus.
 53.C. Le se euh a euh /inaudible/
 54.E. Et j'ai acheté après, et j'ai acheté euh, pour les imperméabiliser, et c'était trop tard!
 55.C. Ah oui, c'était trop tard.
 56.E. C'est dommage.
 57.M. Et ça abîme vraiment?
 58.E. Oh ben tu vois
 59.M. Ah oui!
 60.E. ce que ça donne!
 61.M. Il faut imperméabiliser!
 62.C. Mais on peut on peut .. Mais je veux dire qu'on peut pas l'enlever
 63.B. /inaudible/ Pas facilement, hein!
 64.E. Ben, et non!
 65.B. Si si!
 66.C. Regarde avec une brosse!
 67.B. Tu prends euh avec un chiffon mouillé.
 68.E. Ne me crache pas sur les bottes! /laughs/
 69.B. Tu ne pourrais pas mettre un .. chiffon mouillé?
 70.E. Mais je mets, je mets du cirage tous les jours, tous les jours, et ça reste comme ça.
 71.B. Mais moi j'enlève ça, hein, avec un peu de l'eau
 72.E. De l'eau?
 73.C. Comment ça se fait que le bout est comme ça?
 74.E. Quel bout?
 75.C. Et ben ça, le bout il est bien!

76.E. Oui, le bout est bien, mais c'est le, /inaudible/
 77.B. Parce que je
 78.E. est affecté
 79.C. Et comment ça se fait puisque c'est /inaudible/
 80.B. je n'en sais rien /laugh/ Je pense que
 81.M. Ah oui, là y a une ligne définie, là.
 82.B. Ah oui, là.
 83.M. Tu nous caches quelque chose, hein /laugh/ Elle doit mettre des petites
 chaussettes, là
 84.E. /laugh, inaudible/
 85.M. juste au juste au bout pour protéger
 86.B. C'est le pli qui les retient, je pense, euh enfin je sais pas
 87.E. Oui, oui, ça c'est vrai.
 88.C. Ouais bé que tu prends une petite brosse, et puis tu frottes.
 89.E. Là je verrai. /inaudible/
 90.C. C'est des bottes que tu as acheté où?
 91.M. Ah oui, ça c'est de la belle botte, hein!
 92.E. C'est des bottes que j'ai achetée là!
 93.M. Ouais ouais ça c'est des belles bottes! /inaudible/
 94.C. Ouais ça se voit, ça se voit /inaudible/ Mais elles montent jusqu'où, elles montent
 jusqu'où ces bottes?
 95.E. Ah ben elles montent jusque là, c'est /inaudible, chuckle/ Non /laughs/ Non mais
 euh oui, c'est ça, mais .. tu vois moi je mets beaucoup de jupes, mets beaucoup de
 jupes, hein
 96.C. Ouais
 97.E. alors l'hiver /?/, sans bottes, aucune possibilité
 98.C. Ouais.
 99.E. tu as juste les bottes
 101.C. Ouais.
 102.E. Parce que sans ça, ou alors c'est ça.
 103.M. Ouais ouais, et si tu viens du Midi
 104.E. Oui
 105.M. là tu, tu vas bientôt. mou, et mourir là
 106.E. Ah non, mais je te dis, non je sais pas ce que c'est, ça, parce que l'autre, je l'ai pas,
 tu vois.
 107.M. Oui mais fais attention, ça c'est quelque chose qui va te rentrer dans le pied!
 108.E. Ah!
 109.M. Non, non, mais tu as vu cette ferraille! Tu as marché
 110.E. Tu crois
 111.M. sur quelque chose, là!
 112.E. Non, mais tu crois que c'est une ferraille?
 113.M. /inaudible/ Mais regarde! .. Là tu as marché sur quelque chose!
 114.E. Ça fait partie de la botte!] Ça fait partie de la botte, moi je crois que c'est
 115.M. Ah bon?

- 116.E.la, le, le style! La
 117.M.Mais fais mettre une semelle! Ah là il faut que tu fasses quelque chose ce truc qui sort
 118.E.Et même, ça me, c'est pas, y a enfin, quand je marche dans l'eau, tu sais
 /microphone moved/,ça ne ça n'affecte pas euh /laughs, inaudible/ euh ça ne fait rien, c'est pas grave /laughs/ Ouais, mais alors tu vois, avec des collants, alors je mets les bottes, avec les collants chauds comme ça, une jupe, c'est bon!
 119.M.Oui, c'est ce que je fais
 120.B.Oui c'est ça, oui
 121.M.d'habitude.
 122.C.Oui, même les collants, c'est même plus chaud qu'un pantalon, tu vois ça te
 123.M.Oui, ça te
 124.C.Parce que ça te colle aux jambes euh ça te
 125.M Çà serre, oui oui ça colle, ça colle
 126.E.Ça colle aux jambes.
 (pause)
 127.B.Hmm .. /giggle/
 128.C. **A quelle heure vous devez partir?**
 129.B.Ah .. ça ne fait rien, j'y arriverai quand j'y arriverai /laugh/

From the initial discussion of the researcher needing to be somewhere to the follow-up question, there are approximately 100 lines of discussion on other topics including phosphorescence, drinks, Evelynne's boots and finally after a pause the speakers return to the topic from Line One. There are many potential factors at play in this interrogative choice. According to the activation hypothesis formulated in 4.4, less active open propositions have fronted question words. End-Weight may explain a tendency for question words with prepositions to occur in the *in situ* position, but there was also a hypothesis that the question expression *à quelle heure* is a fronted construction. The interrogative structure in this context is Q proV. The use of this structure may give support to the idea that the open proposition "you must leave at X time" although active had lost activation over time.

4.8.3 Proximal Questions: priming & saliency

Does the use of one question type prime the next question in a conversation? Can a structure itself be active? In the passage illustrated in Example 4.59 the speakers are

discussing French films playing in the Twin City area. There are a series of questions and answers in this passage. There are three WH interrogatives of the form proV Q followed by a fourth of the form c'est Q que proV.

Example 4.59

- M. Parce que moi j'aime beaucoup En Attendant Godot.
E. **C'est où? C'est Guthrie?**
M. Non.
C. Non, c'est à St Paul.
M. C'est c'est un autre nom, euh, j'ai jamais entendu parler.
/long pause/
B. mm .. C'est c'est à l'université .. euh
M. Ah oui!
B. Punchinello Players? Je pense?
M. Je crois que ça disait quelque chose Theater
B. Ah oui.
M. mais maintenant, j'ai lu ça, très vite.
E. Oh ben tiens j'aurais dû regarder dans ma boîte aux lettres
M. Ah mais c'est dans mon cartable! C'est dans mon cartable parce que je l'ai pris pour le montrer, à Bill, justement.
/long pause/
B. J'aimerais bien aller voir
M. Voilà
B. les films, mais
E. **C'est quand? .. Ça?**
M. En Attendant Godot
B. Ça commence ce soir
C. Ça commence ce soir?
E. C'est pendant le week-end?
B. Et puis les films.
E. Ah oui les films! Mais euh, En Attendant Godot, là
M. Alors En Attendant Godot .. alors .. Punchinello Players .. En Attendant Godot, vendredi et samedi, euh du 18 février au 5 mars, à 8 heures du soir, ah oui, vous devez avoir raison, Madame Barnes, North Mall Theater. C'est located behind the St Paul Student Center of the St Paul Campus.
B. Aah!
M. Enfin voilà, donc
C. C'est
M. c'est sur le campus
C. **C'est quand Garde à Vue?**

- E. Garde à Vue, c'est pas cette semaine, c'est l'autre. C'est vendredi, du vendredi, c'est du 16 au au /throat clearing/ au 22, quelque chose comme ça. Oui je crois que c'est peut-être le 22, donc c'est pendant le week-end, hein. oui .. et puis jusqu'à mardi, je crois.
- M. **Et c'est où que ça joue?**
- C. Euh, Bell Museum.

I hypothesize that in this passage the *in situ* form itself is activated. Use of a particular structure to ask a question encourages further use of that structure by the speakers. It is also possible that the intonational yes-no questions influence the choice of the *in situ* structure since they are structurally quite similar. An alternative view to activation or priming would hypothesize that using the same form over and over would cause the structure to lose its saliency. As mentioned in section 4.1 the use of *c'est Q que proV* is arguably a type of style shifting. From a psycholinguistic perspective, this change of structure use could be due to the loss of saliency of the *proV Q* form after its repetitive use (as well as intonation yes-no questions).

In Example 4.60, Evelyne recasts her repetition in a different form since she believes she was not understood.

Example 4.60

- M. Qu'est-ce que c'est?
- E. Euh, un article sur j'ai pas le temps de le lire.
- B. Les cranberries ça pousse dans ce qu'on appelle des bogs.
- E. Oui **c'est quoi?** C'est ce que je voulais vous demander. **Qu'est-ce que c'est bog?**
- B. Je ne sais pas!

Evelyne initially asks her question with the *proV Q* form. However, the referent of *c'* is not entirely clear. So, in her next attempt, she uses the *Q proV* form with right dislocation.

4.8.4 Conclusion

This section has provided a preliminary exploration of the role of psychology in understanding structure choice. This particular factor is a very rich area that merits well-designed experiments concerning production. For further investigation, the following question is of interest: Is the ease of answering related to activation (ease of processing)? In other words, is it easier to answer questions with Highly Active open propositions?

4.9 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined interrogatives in Spoken French from various and inter-related perspectives. The goal of this chapter was to determine the role different parameters play in interrogative choice. As a result of an attempt to be thorough in this chapter, some of the factors are redundant, some are still speculative and some explain comparatively insignificant facts. Nevertheless, factors from all components of grammar affect interrogative choice.

Many variables of the sociolinguistic parameter were controlled in this dissertation by evaluating a single corpus. The determination of register restricts the number and type of structures used. Frequency observations in the Barnes-Blyth corpus reveal a preference for two structures in particular: Q proV and QVpro. It was established that the use of structures such as pronoun inversion and clefts represented style-shifting for specific purposes.

Illocutionary factors play an important role in interrogative choice. For communicative contexts other than interlocutor-addressed questions, question-marking is essential. The marked *in situ* structure is dispreferred in contexts involving rhetorical questions, self-addressed questions or reported speech.

For communicative contexts that involve interlocutor-addressed direct speech acts, the choice among our most frequent structures relies on the concepts of activation of

the open proposition, semantics, answerability and expectedness. Demonstrating the application and interaction of these factors is the goal of both Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 5: Function and use of WH-Interrogative Structures: Sample Analyses

The goal of this chapter is to sharpen the description of the function and use of WH-interrogative structures presented in Chapter 3. This outline is presented according to frequency in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. In each case, the description takes into account the factors presented in Chapter 4: sociolinguistic, illocutionary, semantic, information structure, pragmatic, phono-syntactic and psychological. As explicitly stated throughout this dissertation, the findings thus far have been based on compilations of previous research, several new concepts and the interrogative distribution in the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

This chapter seeks to verify the roles and usage described thus far by also analyzing data from another corpus, *Texte aus dem 'français parlé* (1984) collected by Jürgen Eschmann. The corpus consists of 9 texts of various conversations representing a spectrum of sociolinguistic contexts and speakers. The contexts for each text are presented in Table 5.1 (translated from the German).

Table 5.1 Contexts for Texts in Eschmann (1984)

Text Number	Context & Speakers
One	Speaker is a female student, approximately 20 years old, from Paris. Both parents come from the Midi, but she grew up in Paris. The text was taped in Germany shortly after the May rebellion of 1968.
Two & Three	Recording place is a garden in the Paris area. Recorded persons: A and B are women in their early to mid forties, from the upper middle class. C is the daughter of A, D is the daughter of B, both 16 years old. They attend university-tracked schools and are friends. The recording is an afternoon visit of A and C to B and D. At first they look and comment on vacation photos from Yugoslavia (text 2). In the episode (after tape change) the topic changes to everyday life (text 3).
Four	Recording place is a school in the Paris area. Recorded persons: A (student in 5e), B (student in 7e), C (student in 7e) The recording was provided by Jean-Paul Martin, who also created the first transcription. Several people enter the room during the recording. Their comments are marked with Z. The original intention was to create a text that contains many different kinds of question formats, in order to analyze and compare them with other texts. That's why the recording director (who is himself French) tries to get the students to act out a scene.
Five	This text is a recording of a dispatcher station of a Bus Company in France. All data (phone numbers, bus numbers, routes, etc.) were left out and are replaced in the text by (12345). Speaker: Z: Dispatcher O and OA: Bus drivers (both male)
Six	Recording location is an apartment in the Lyon area. The recording is part of an evening discussion amongst good acquaintances. Recorded persons: A: Teacher (secondary education) from the Lyon area. Age: late 20's. The first 15 years of her life, she lived in different towns, then in the Lyon area. B: Teacher (secondary education) from the Lyon area. Age: early 30's. The first 19 years of his life, he lived in different towns, then in the Lyon area.
Seven	Recording is in a living room of agricultural engineer in a leadership position. Age: early 40's; in the Department Tarn for 24 years, before that North Africa. The recording deals with the fact that a specialist explains a few novices his job assignment (here raising cows). The language switches between specialized and everyday language. A slight south French accent is detected.
Eight	Dialog partners are two older ladies, late 60's, from the Department Haute Loire, with whom my wife and I had a conversation on the street. A did not finish school, nothing is known about B, but she probably didn't go to any school past high school. If <i>patois</i> was quoted, I tried to transcribe it in the orthographical system of the Institut d'Etudes Occitanes.
Nine	The text deals with the rebellion of May 1968 and was recorded in Germany, where three students were staying temporarily.

	Recorded persons: A: Female student from Bretagne, B: Male Student from Bretagne C: Female student, bilingual, German-French, lived in different places in Germany and France, last in Paris. All three are approximately 20 years old.
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Note that unlike the Barnes-Blyth corpus, the Eschmann corpus includes a variety of communicative contexts and speakers. When an interrogative token from this particular corpus is presented, it is immediately followed by a list of alloquestions for comparative analysis.

5.1 MOST FREQUENT STRUCTURES: Q proV, proV Q AND Q

This first section focuses on the most frequent structures in the corpus and how they are used in the interrogative system. Particular emphasis is placed on the distribution of Q proV and proV Q in situations where the referent of the interrogative is a direct object.

5.1.1 Q proV

The over-arching low socio-stylistic evaluation of this fronted structure is rejected in this dissertation. As argued in Chapter 4, since the Q proV and proV Q structures were both used with great frequency in similar stylistic contexts, it must be assumed that they share register evaluation. Concerning illocutionary factors, Q proV showed the greatest diversity of communicative function of any of the structures. Q proV can be used for interlocutor-addressed, rhetorical, topic-introducing, suggestive or ambiguously-addressed questions. Further, this structure is preferred in instances of reported speech, especially in contrast with proV Q. These tendencies were proposed to be explicable under the rubric of questionness; Q proV is higher on the question-marking scale than proV Q and so is used in instances of less question-like questions. Using another lens presented in Chapter 4, Q proV may represent the unmarked structure for WH-questions in spoken French.

Semantico-pragmatic factors play an important role in the choice of this structure. As we saw in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, the question words *comment* and *pourquoi* appear frequently in this structure. These two particular question words are subject to slight changes in meaning when they appear pre-verbally versus post-verbally. Since the speakers of the Barnes-Blyth corpus are native speakers of French living in an English-speaking environment, there are many tokens in the corpus involving naming and saying. This naming and saying function is realized by *comment* proV where V is *s'appeler*, *se dire* etc. The use of these particular verbs accounts in part for the striking preference of the Q proV structure for lexical verbs. On a purely syntactic basis, there are no Q proV structures containing a question expression with a preposition (except when the question expression involves *quel* or *lequel*).

Coveney's observation that this structure is not affected by linguistic or pragmatic constraints is not at all consistent with the data in this corpus especially when Q proV includes *quesque* proV. The information structure analysis found that there is a tendency for the open proposition to be inactive although any activation status is possible. The relevance analysis found that this structure is usually accessibly relevant. The answerability hypothesis predicts that Q proV interrogatives are less answerable than their proV Q counterparts. The expectedness heuristic predicts less expected question expressions to appear in Q proV in comparison with proV Q. In Example 5.1 a Q proV structure is used in accordance with the above observations:

Example 5.1

- E. Ah ben tiens c'est ce qu'un de mes étudiants m'a posé la question. **Pourquoi on met des accents?** Alors je, lui donne l'exemple, puis /chuckling/ je lui mets, je lui mets un mot au tableau, alors je lui prononce sans accent et avec accent /laugh/.

In the above example, the question word is *pourquoi*, which for the most part restricts the syntax to a fronted structure. The communicative event is also reported speech that precludes the *in situ* form. Therefore, the proV Q variant: **?/#on met des accents pourquoi?* is pragmatically and syntactically prohibited. The only other structure that is grammatically but not distributionally likely is *pourquoi est-ce qu'on met des accents?*

The fronted adjectival question words (determiners) are a subset of Q proV. As mentioned earlier, there are no (prep Q) proV structures in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. All four of the *quel N proV* structures in the corpus are realized with a preposition. Consider the following example:

Example 5.2

- E. Bon ben, c'est, là c'est la quatorzième
B. Ça va pas ça
E. et tu, tu tournes /laughs/ à gauche, tu tournes à gauche après euh ça doit être 2-3 blocks euh
M. Ah oui, tiens!
B. Oui, c'est juste dans le coin.
C. **Mais à quelle heure vous devez être là-bas?**
B. mais, ça ne fait rien, j'y serai un peu, un petit peu en retard, mais
E. Il doit être un peu avant 8 heures

Example 5.2 is practically a repetition of a question uttered a few moments earlier in the corpus: *à quelle heure vous devez partir?* The consistency of question form may be

accounted for by the psycholinguistic factor of structure activation. The sub-standard label attributed to this structure in the literature is once again put into question by this context since Christine addresses this question to the researcher.

Another subset of Q proV involves a pronominal question word. There is only one example of this particular structure in the corpus. This structure as well as its adjectival counterpart above distinguishes itself from other question words since they necessarily inquire about a given set. In other words, the possible answers are restricted. In this way, the factor of answerability may work in an entirely different way for these structures.

Example 5.3

- B. y a toutes sortes de clubs, pour tous les sports. Euh, tu devrais téléphoner à , Rec Sports? Recreational Sports
- M. Oui
- B. pour te renseigner
- M. Ah c'est une bonne idée.
- B. c'est des
- M. Je vais le faire pour le spring /inaudible/, on a bien envie de
- B. Oui.
- M. enfin perdre quelques kilos au spring, toujours.
- E. /laugh/
- B. Je ne sais pas si c'est
- E. Je ne sais vraiment pas ce que tu vas perdre!
- B. sur les deux campus, je crois, mais
- C. Oui moi non plus, mais c'est pas grave/laugh/
- B. je suis sûre que ça existe /inaudible/
- E. Oui /inaudible/
- M. Non mais ça me manque!
- E. Oui! oui oui!
- M. Non ça me manque /laughs/Parce que hier euh , non, mercredi
- E. J'ai pensé à toi, Christine!
- C. Oui ça ira dire encore /inaudible/ le sauna, voilà
- M. mercredi nous sommes allés .. oui oui mais ici euh c'est à double sens les saunas. /laughs/
- E. Mais qu'est-ce que ça veut dire?
- M. Il paraît, oui oui, il paraît.

- E. /laugh/ Oh moi j'ai jamais entendu parler de ça et j'y vais /chuckling/ j'ai jamais eu de propositions.
- M. **Auquel tu vas?**
- C. Ah tu y vas, hein! /laughs, inaudible/
- M. Ah ben oui, hein! Ah voilà! On sait qu'elle passe ses après-midis! /laugh/ Elle revient toujours l'air réjoui /inaudible/
- C. Epanouie
- E. /Laugh/ Vous exagérez là!
- M. Non, non, mais tu veux dire le sauna le hammam?
- E. Le euh ah le hammam? /laugh/ Ah ben ça je sais pas, c'est
- M. C'est-à-dire le vrai sauna origin, originel, originaire
- E. Euh, oui oui.
- M. C'est ça?
- E. Oui, enfin, euh

In this example, the interrogative pronoun's referent is locally referred to with the locative pronoun *y*. The *in situ* alternative *? tu vas auquel?* is of dubious acceptability. In the previous utterance, Evelyne states "I go there (the sauna)..." and Martine asks a question to discern "Which there is that?" In this case, the open proposition "you go to X place" is highly active, but the question word is fronted. The inappropriateness of the *in situ* form in the above example is not necessarily consistent for all similar structures. For example in the unattested context: *Regarde tous les stylos à côté de mon journal intime*, the *in situ* interrogative *tu écris avec lequel?* is acceptable.

Next I apply the analysis to a token from the Eschmann corpus. Example 5.4 illustrates subject pronoun reformulation with the Q proV interrogative(s):

Example 5.4 (from Eschmann Text 6)

- B. ...ah ben chez vous aussi, jusqu'à soixante ans on pourra vivre sur cette...
- A. Soixante-cinq même.
- B. ...soixante ou soixante-cinq, on pourra vivre là-dessus. Or par exemple... en mathématiques... eh bien y a une évolution... euh ... les mathématiques modernes... attendez comment ça...
- A. C'est... euh ...
- B. **Comment on appelle ça en a-**
- X. La théorie des ensembles

- A. La théorie des ensembles
- B. La... **comment vous appelez ça?**
- X. Mengentheorie, Mengenlehre.

- a) Comment vous appelez ça?
- b) #Vous appelez ça comment?

This example follows the trends found in the Barnes-Blyth corpus where the question word *comment* in combination with the verb *appeler* is almost categorically found in the Q pro-V structure.

Further discussion of this structure, in particular *quesque* proV continues in Section 5.1.3.

5.1.2 proV Q

The analysis of factors influencing interrogative choice presented in Chapter 4 yields a specific description of the usage of proV Q in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. In the case of several parameters, it is a marked structure in contrast with Q proV since its use is restricted in many cases to the communicative function of interlocutor-addressed questions. This structure is not used for reported speech or for rhetorical questions. ProV Q is not syntactically question marked. Its syntax resembles that of an affirmative proV X sentence.

It is no surprise that the *in situ* form is used for the function of echo question. Such questions are associated with interactions where all elements are highly active. It would be logical that the *in situ* form would retain its highly active status for other non-echo situations. The interrogative in Example 5.5 was the only structure that approximated the echo-question function in the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

Example 5.5

- B. Il s'agit de, d'évènements euh supposés
- M. **il s'agit de quoi?** /laugh/

There are strong question word tendencies for the proV Q structure. The question word *pourquoi* is nearly categorically banished from the *in situ* position. The question word *comment* avoids the structure as well but not to the same extent. In contrast, the question word *où* is found in this structure unless there is a strong pragmatic or stylistic reason to place it in COMP.

Example 5.6 demonstrates both the communicative and question word restrictions described in the previous paragraph resulting in the use of a Q proV structure:

Example 5.6

- M. pas inclus, dans ce prix. Et les, alors il nous a dit, alors on en a parlé à la réunion, euh à quelques heures avant, que la fête commence, on a eu une réunion euh, les employés et l, et le grand patron
- E. Mm
- M. et on lui a dit mais, **pour le pourboire, comment ça se passe?** Il nous a dit, oh vous avez juste euh, vous allez à la table et vous leur dites que c'est pas inclus, [enfin]

This interrogative involves reported speech and the question expression *comment*. This illocutionary function (i.e. reported question) alone precludes the alloquestion *#ça se passe comment?* Frequency patterns for this particular question word would also predict that the proV Q structure be avoided in this context.

The pragmatic tendencies of the proV Q structure are strong; the structure is often used in contexts that are highly answerable, active and highly expected. There are more highly active open propositions associated with this structure than with any other in the corpus. Let's consider the following example:

Example 5.7

- M. Je sais que moi j'adore danser. Avec Bill on va de temps en temps à Garcia's
- E. Ah oui?
- B. Le voilà.
- M. Ah!

- B. /chuckle/
 M. C'est gratuit
 E. Ah oui?
 M. pour danser, mais alors les gens sont les uns sur les autres.
 E. **Mais .. tu danses quoi? Tu danses quoi?** Le rock?
 M. Ben tu es obligée de faire les trucs de n'importe quoi. Enfin moi je peux pas danser le rock

In the above example, the open proposition “you dance x” is highly presupposed. The verb “*danser*” was repeated twice by Martine before Evelyne’s interrogative. The question is highly answerable for two reasons: Evelyne knows that M knows the answer plus she gives a possible answer, ‘*le rock?*’ immediately after her question. These factors render the fronted version #*Qu’est-ce que tu danses?* nearly unacceptable.

The pragmatic associations with the post-verbal interrogative are so strong that it can create a feeling of presupposition even without obvious contextual presupposition clues. In Example 5.8 Martine uses the proV Q structure to ask about Sunday plans at the beginning of the corpus.

Example 5.8

- C. Peut-être il faut .. un divan oui
 M. **Vous allez faire quoi ce dimanche**
 /inaudible/
 M. J'en avais un à dîner l'autre fois euh

The proV Q structure indicates that “you are going to do x this Sunday” is to be construed as highly active, even though it is not in this context. A more expanded discussion of the *in situ* use of *quoi* in contrast with *quesque* pro V appears in Section 5.1.3.

An important subset of the *in situ* structure is the case where the question expression involves a preposition. As discussed in the section on syntax, the presence of a preposition seems to restrict the placement of the question word. According to the

distribution in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, proV prepQ does not surface as prepQ proV (unless the question word is a determiner) although the latter is not ungrammatical.

Example 5.9

- M. Non non, ça va. Moi j'ai mon anorak derrière si j'ai froid. Ah ce thé alors!
Qu'est-ce qu'il est bon! Enfin l'autre fois je l'ai senti!
- B. /chuckle/
/pause, two conversations overlap/
/inaudible, laugh/
- B. Ça c'est /inaudible/
B. /inaudible, laugh, inaudible/
- M. **Alors tu vas faire ta thèse sur quoi, toi?**
- E. Je vais la euh, ma thèse sur euh l'Espace et le Temps Féminin.
- C. Ah oui, oui!

In this example, the open proposition “you are going to do your thesis on X” is not active in the discourse. However, we have a competing pragmatic tendency related to answerability. Martine knows that Evelyne knows the answer.

The proV *quel N* interrogative structure like its fronted counterpart is unique amongst the interrogative structures studied in this dissertation since the question word necessarily involves an NP. Five out of the seven structures of this type in the Barnes-Blyth corpus involve prepositional phrases. Example 5.10 however does not have a preposition.

Example 5.10

- M. C'est religieux?
- B. Oui. Oui, c'est un, congregational church
- M. mm
- B. First Congregational, c'est juste de, l'autre côté de l'autoroute.
- C. Congregational, comme euh
- M. **C'est quel genre de religion?**
- B. Protestant! /laugh/
- E. C'est quel style? /laughs/
- B. C'est très euh libéral, progressif euh /laugh/

This interrogative is unexpected as seen by the laughter afterwards. According to our guidelines, the question word should be fronted in such a case. However, the alloquestion # *quel genre de religion c'est?* is unacceptable due to focus position/end-weight factors.

There is only one example of proV *lequel* in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. In comparison with its adjectival counterpart above, the referent of the question word is obligatorily highly presupposed.

Example 5.11

- E. Qui est-ce qui connaît, tu connais Surdyk's?
- M. C'est, c'est dans /inaudible/ de Dinky Town
- C. Oui!
- E. Et ben c'est juste à côté, c'est pas très très loin, bon où y a Surdyk's, tu traverses là, la la rue ..et euh
- C. **C'est laquelle?** Juste à côté de Hennepin là, euh
- E. Oui, c'est sur la University
- C. University et Hennepin

In this example, the open proposition “it is x road” is highly active. Evelyne’s hesitation in the utterance before the interrogative creates high expectations for Christine’s question. The fronted alloquestion *laquelle c'est?* is disfavored due to End-Weight and focus final preferences.

Next, I examine *in situ* interrogatives from various texts in the Eschmann corpus. In each case, alloquestions are presented and discussed. The first example illustrates the use of proV Q in a humorous interaction.

Example 5.12 (from Eschmann Text 2):

- A. Cette photo est bien aussi, (PPPPP) qui regarde.
- B. Ah on dirait Heiligenblut [eligenblyt] là.
- C. Heiligenblut [eligenblyt]

- A. Hein?
- B. Ah oui ça venait de ça (?????)
- A. **Vous parlez quoi?**
[LAUGHTER]
- A. Yougoslave? Chinois? Et dites...
- D. (une ville) en Autriche ma chère.

In this context, we assume the alloquestions to be a Q proV and Q.

- a) Vous parlez quoi?
- b) #Qu'est-ce que vous parlez?
- c) #Quoi?

The use proV Q structure in this context is consistent with the proposed analysis.

In the case of answerability, the answer is assumed to be succinct and the speaker provides possible (comic) answers. The Q structure is not possible in this context since the proV is not accessible to the listener.

The next two utterances are examples of a switch-board operator speaking to bus drivers.

Example 5.13 (from Eschmann Text 5):

- Z. Oui
- O. (12345)
- Z. Oui, parlez (12345)
- O. Euh tiens...j'suis à (PPPPP). **T'as quelle heure là?**
- Z. Il est...quarante-huit.

Likely allosentences are as follows:

- a) T'as quelle heure là?
- b) Quelle heure est-ce que tu as là?
- c) Quelle heure tu as là?
- d) #T'as l'heure là?

In this context, the activation of the open proposition “you have x time” is accessible but not highly active. We must look to other explanations for using the *in situ* structure here. The concept of answerability is key for understanding the use of structure

(a). By the very nature of the job, a dispatcher must know the time. The unacceptability of allosentence (d), which on the surface is a yes-no question, reinforces the high answerability of the question since asking whether or not the operator has the time is nearly absurd. The pragmatic situation of high answerability favors the use of the *in situ* structure in this context.

Consider another example from the same text.

Example 5.14 (from Eschmann Text 5):

- Z. Oui, (12345)
 O. Ben (il se retrouve c'est le bus (12345)) là, le bus (12345), j'ai plus de batterie.
 Z. **Où vous êtes où?**
 O. J'suis aux (PPPPP), je fais neuf heures dix.

Probable allosentences include:

- a) Vous êtes où?
- b) Où vous êtes?
- c) Où est-ce que vous êtes?
- d) #Où?

In this utterance we have a case of the question expression *où*, which in Chapter 4 was given the label of inherently answerable. Frequency data has shown that there is a clear preference for *où* to appear post-verbal. In any context, the question “where are you?” appears to be highly answerable. I propose that option (b) encodes a notion of surprise or bewilderment whereas option (c) appears exceedingly polite for the context.

The final token in this brief look at Eschmann's corpus is from another text:

Example 5.15 (from Eschmann Text 8):

- B. Eh ben...eh non. Ma mère est pas de Puy, était pas de Puy, non.
 A. Moi je suis fille de paysans. Alors, allez, enregistrez.
 X. **Vous êtes quoi?**
 A. Fille de paysans.
 X. Fille de paysans?

A. Oui monsieur.

The potential allosentences are as follows:

- a) Vous êtes quoi?
- b) #Qu'est-ce que vous êtes?
- c) #Qu'êtes-vous?
- d) #Quoi?

Unlike the previous example that involved a question expression with inherent answerability, the question concept translated as “what” is much more reliant on context for choice of structure. Many factors point to the choice of the pro V Q structure in this context. For instance, the open proposition “you are something” is highly active and the question is highly answerable given that it was answered before it was asked. Both the speaker and the listener know the question and the answer by the time the question is uttered officially. Allosentence (d) serves as a reminder that high activation is not enough to justify the use of the Q alone structure.

With this somewhat cursory glance at another corpus, we find that the factors as outlined in this dissertation have reasonable explanatory power for the use of the *in situ* structure beyond what was seen in the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

5.1.3 *quesque* proV versus proV quoi

This dissertation takes the original step of categorizing *quesque* proV with Q proV rather than with Q esq pro V. The distribution of this structure, which parallels Q proV nicely in frequency and usage serves to justify the choice. For example, in terms of communicative function, *quesque* proV, like Q proV, may be used for rhetorical questions. It is a frequent choice for reported speech. It does however carry several identifying features such as the most popular locus for self-addressed questions. It also involves more question-marking than Q proV. Also, unlike Q proV, it has a propensity for the copula. Concerning its pragmatic evaluation, it is very much in line with Q proV.

To clarify the role of *quesque* proV, evaluate the following example:

Example 5.16

- E. Oui mais le sauna à la, moi j'aime pas tellement parce que y a aucune
M. Ah oui
E. y a pas de c'est sec, c'est sec.
M. C'est possible.
E. Alors je se, mets constamment de l'eau, de l'eau, mais, euh c'est sec, y a pas de vapeur!
M. Ah oui
E. **Qu'est-ce que tu veux faire dans un sauna sans vapeur?**
M. mm Ah

The communicative function in this interrogative is clearly not interlocutor-addressed. The rhetorical question expresses Evelyne's exasperation with the situation. There are several explanations for the choice of Q proV and the avoidance of proV Q in this context. Because of this illocutionary factor, the proV Q alloquestion #*Tu veux faire quoi dans un sauna sans vapeur?* appears awkward. Secondly, the prepositional phrase *dans un sauna sans vapeur* is focal hence cannot give up its focal position for a pragmatically inappropriate topical one.

The question words *quesque* and *quoi* provide the only situations where there is true distribution between a 'single' question word ('what') and two structures in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. Let's weigh all the factors discussed in Chapter 4 and earlier in this chapter to formulate more concrete explanations for the use of these two structures:

quesque proV:

- 1) Referential Specificity: less referentially established. It presupposes little agreement on the referent being inquired about. Requests an explanation.
- 2) VP: Lexical content of the VP is inactive
- 3) X=long and unknown

proV *quoi*:

- 1) Referential Specificity: more referentially established. It presupposes more agreement on referent being inquired about. Requests an entity.

- 2) VP: Lexical content of the VP is active
- 3) X=short and known

Consider the following *quesque* proV example:

Example 5.17

- M. Mais mais vous savez en parlant de sport euh un, en France, au lycée aussi bien qu'à l'université j'étais dans l'équipe euh de basket de filles. J'étais capitaine pendant trois années de l'équipe de basket
- C. mm
- M. deux ans à la fac
- E. **Et .. qu'est-ce que .. ça donnait?**
- M. où j'ai joué tant, ça me manque énormément

In this interrogative, Evelyne is looking for an explanation. The lexical content of the verb is not active. The answer (X) is unknown and likely very lengthy. The above guidelines work well in this case to explain the choice of the fronted structure. Let's look at an example with a lexical verb and a proV Q structure:

Example 5.18:

- C. Ah moi j'aimais bien, moi, la soupe aux poireaux et tout
- E. Ah non, non, non
- M. Tu dis poireaux?
- C. La soupe aux poireaux, oui
- M. Ah! Décidément! /inaudible/
- C. **Tu dis quoi, toi?**
- M. Poreaux! /inaudible/
- C. Poreaux?! Oh c'est poireaux!
- M. Je dis poreaux et j'ai toujours appris poreaux et quand je vais au marché j'achète des poreaux, et tout le monde me comprend. Tu dis bien un oignon?

In this interrogative, Christine is looking for an entity rather than an explanation. The potential X (answer) is short, it is known to be a one word-answer. The verb *dire* is active in the discourse. Again, the guidelines seem to work well in understanding the use of the *in situ* structure.

For this next comparison, the tokens are extracted from different conversations in the corpus. Example 5.19 exemplifies the category proV Q whereas example 5.20 is *quesque* proV. The verb *prendre* is the same for both examples as is the use of second person pronoun. However, in 5.19 we have the singular and informal form of the pronoun whereas in 5.20 we have the plural and formal form.

Example 5.19

- M. Moi je suis à la recherche de vrai lard. Alors en deux ans je n'ai pas trouvé de lard.
 E. Ah non non! Là alors c'est le c'est .. c'est ça.
 C. Tu sais ce que je fais moi, quand quand il faut des lardons, pour n'importe
 M. Oui.
 E. Oui
 C. souvent il faut des lardons
 M. **Tu prends quoi?**
 C. Je prends du bacon puis je roule, je le roule
 M. C'est pas pareil!

Example 5.20

- B. Euh .. Christine, sers-toi /laugh/ puis euh
 C. **Qu'est-ce que vous prenez, vous?**
 B. Oh je sais pas /laughs/
 C. Allez, allez allez /laughs/
 E. Faites comme chez vous! /laughs/
 C. Faites comme chez vous!

In 5.19, the open proposition is highly implied by C's opening line in this discussion. In fact, she forces M's question, which is highly relevant and accompanied by a highly active open proposition available in the discourse world. In 5.20, the question of interest is situationally relevant and the open proposition (you have x) is situationally accessible. The situational aspect of this question relies on the fact that C knows that in social situations, everyone will take a drink. She also is trying to be polite. The use of

the fronted plus *est-ce que* form is more appropriate for this accessible and polite situation.

Next I consider several examples from the Eschmann corpus using *quesque* proV in the interrogative.

Example 5.20 (from Eschmann Text 9):

- C. Ce qui ne se produit pas dans tous les pays, mais enfin la révolution la révolution étudiante c'est [...] le phénomène a pris seulement de l'ampleur du fait que les ouvriers on cru par a- par la voie tracée par les étudiants pouvoir obtenir des des avantages de salaire, des congés payés, des...des reductions dans les chemins de fer et des choses comme ça quoi.
- X. **Qu'est-ce que vous pensez de l'avenir?**
- B. Bon on verra on verra on verra

- a) Qu'est-ce que vous pensez de l'avenir?
- b) # Vous pensez quoi de l'avenir?

The choice of this structure follows nicely from our expansion of the idea of answerability where *quesque* is used for an explanation whereas *quoi* is used for a more succinct answer. The very nature of the verb phrase necessitates an explanation rendering allosentence (b) awkward. In addition, there is a problem with a post-focal argument in spoken French since it is naturally construed as a right-dislocated element.

The next example with its allosentence reveals less certainty of the choice of one form over another.

Example 5.21 (from Eschmann Text 7):

- A. Mais les les...pour en revenir à ces bêtes, les meilleures c'est celles qui ont...des viandes avec du...du gras dedans. Voyez, on appelle ces viandes les viandes persillées. J'sais pas si vous connaissez ce terme, persillé, c'est-à-dire qui a un peu de gras à l'intérieur
- [17 lines of discussion led by 'A' on this type of meat]
- X. Et **qu'est-ce que vous faites exactement avec ces vaches?** Alors vous vous cherchez vous cherchez les taureaux, vous cherchez les vaches...
- A. Oui...oui...oui oui oui.

- a) Qu'est-ce que vous faites exactement avec ces vaches?
- b) Vous faites quoi exactement avec ces vaches?

In this case, either structure appears to be pragmatically appropriate. Nevertheless, the hypothesis on the difference between *quesque* and *quoi* relied on the type of answer expected. In the case of 5.21 an explanation is expected thereby making the choice of *quesque* more likely.

The next example shows a context where the explanation of interrogative choice does not fall neatly in the patterns discussed thus far, thereby revealing a weakness of the analysis.

Example 5.22 (from Eschmann Text 5):

- Z. Et alors, le...le retro ne vas pas?
- OA. Ah non (j'en ai) y en (n') pas du tout là
- Z. T'en (n') as pas?
- OA. Non non
- Z. Ah tu es à la gare?
- OA. Je suis à la gare.
- Z. Toujours avec le (12345) alors.
- OA. Oui c'est (ça) exa-...c'est exact.
- Z. Bon, je vais les rappeler pour savoir ce qu'ils font. Reste à l'écoute, hein.
- OA. (Une fois) dépanné, **qu'est-ce qu'on fait**, on prend le train?
- Z. Tais-toi donc, va.

- a) Qu'est-ce qu'on fait?
- b) On fait quoi?

The use of the Q proV structure is consistent with the fact that the open proposition is not active. However, our analysis involving answerability would have predicted allosentence (b) in this case due to the fact that a potential answer is provided in the yes-no question that immediately follows.

Next, I take the extraction a step further and only compare *quesque c'est?* and *c'est quoi?* separately from the rest of the data. First, it is important to point out that not

all *c'est quoi* structures are simply a variant of *quesque c'est*. Look at the context in Example 5.23 where the participants are asking Betsy about her case of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever:

Example 5.23

- E. Et tu as attrapé ça où?
B. très grave, dans mon cas.
E. Au Minnesota ou
B. Non! Au Maryland. En en fait je pense qu'on était jamais tout à fait sûr, que c'était ça.
E. Ah ouais.
B. Il paraît /laugh/
E. Ah c'est comme mon frère
C. **Et alors c'est quoi les symptômes?**
B. Enfin, de la fièvre

In this case a possible fronted variant of the structure is *quels symptômes est-ce qu'il y a?* not merely *qu'est-ce que c'est les symptômes?*

Overall, the formulations given above remain the same except we remove the variable of the verb. For the *quesque c'est* versus *c'est quoi* distinction, the informativeness of the verb remains constantly low. In fact, according to factors involving focus position, the verb *être* should avoid the final position altogether. So, there is likely some overriding pragmatic factor that encourages its use.

Quesque c'est:

- 1) Referential Specificity: less referentially established. It presupposes little agreement on the referent being inquired about. Requests an explanation.
- 2) X=long and unknown

C'est quoi:

- 1) Referential Specificity: more referentially established. It presupposes more agreement on referent being inquired about. Requests an entity.
- 2) X=short and known

This outline is compatible with Blanche-Benveniste's observation (1997) that *qu'est-ce que c'est* is used for a request for a general definition whereas *c'est quoi* is used for a definition of a term just used in the discourse. Further proof of the distinction between these two interrogatives lies in the case where the utterance "*Qu'est-ce que c'est?*" can be used in a context meaning "*Qu'est-ce qu'il y a?*" which requests an explanation whereas "*#C'est quoi?*" is inappropriate.

Next, consider Example 5.24 with a left detachment followed by *quesque c'est*:

Example 5.24

- M. Moi le le le le luthérianisme, ils sont libéraux, de, de ma connaissance, c'est libéral
 C. Ouais.
 M. Et **alors les Mormons, qu'est-ce que c'est?**
 E. Ah ça c'est encore .. autre chose.

The use of Q proV in this context works well within our guidelines: Mormons is not referentially established and it requests an explanation (too big for X). In this case, we have a clear pragmatic restriction on the variant # *les Mormons, c'est quoi?* In contrast, Example 5.25 illustrates a proV Q token.

Example 5.25

- M. Et euh je te dis donc le Tuesday special, tu as un énorme steak, tu as une patate-là au four, avec pleine de sour cream et de et de
 E. /laugh/ Ça c'est nourrissant!
 M. et de beurre et de beurre, et puis tu as le le le, le toast euh euh texan
 E. **C'est quoi,** je connais pas!
 M. /inaudible/
 C. C'est un toast mais large, et comme ça, et bien beurré, c'est bon!

In this case, Texas Toast is referentially established. The X is forseably short and known. The question is also highly answerable. According to our guidelines, the Q proV variant should be pragmatically inappropriate #*qu'est-ce que c'est?* However, notice that

in Example 5.26 our guidelines would have predicted *c'est quoi déjà le saut en extension?*

Example 5.26

- C. Moi ce que je sais faire, c'est le saut en extension.
E. Ah oui.
M. **Qu'est-ce que c'est déjà le saut en extension?**
C. Tu sautes! /laugh/
E. Tu sautes, oui
M. Ah oui! Ah oui! Et puis tu plantais les pieds

This unaccounted for structure in this case may be due to the higher degree of question marking associated with the fronted structure or the length of the right dislocated element. The guidelines cannot explicitly account for all variation.

This section has shown, as was seen in the analysis of the data from the Barnes-Blyth corpus, that the alternation between the allomorphs *quesque* and *quoi* is the most contextually rich variation displayed in French interrogatives.

5.1.4 Q alone

This section looks at several types of interrogatives without a verb. These particular structures have been ignored in the literature for the most part. In fact, many studies do not even regard them as potential structures in an utterance.

This structure has two distinct communicative functions. The first involves a true interlocutor-addressed question. The second entails using either '*comment?*' or '*quoi?*' alone to indicate "what? please say it again/I don't believe you" rather than to ask a true question. This phatic use of the Q structure does not uphold the activation tendency of the structure. The former function is for employment in situations where all the information is given and would be redundant if repeated. In the Barnes-Blyth corpus, there is a clear tendency for *pourquoi* in this structure. Perhaps this is due to the fact that *où?* frequently

surfaces as *c'est où?* whereas *pourquoi?* cannot be *#c'est pourquoi?* and *pourquoi c'est?* is avoided. Consider Example 5.27:

Example 5.27

- E. On ne dit pas un /wa/ oignon!
M. **Ben alors pourquoi?**

The possible alloquestion for this structure is *#pourquoi on ne dit pas un wagnon?* The repetition of the highly active VP carries a very emphatic message. It violates a tendency to avoid redundancy and unnecessary structure.

The Q structure followed by an NP or PP shows very strong question expression preferences. In fact, this Q + phrase structure only occurs with the question words *comment* and *pourquoi* in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. The important factors involved in the choice of this structure are redundancy and semantics.

Example 5.28

- E. J'ai une amie qui euh enfin une amie, quelqu'un que je connais plutôt, en France, c'est la même chose. Elle est spécialisée dans les moines.
B. /laugh/
M. **Comment, dans les moines?**
E. Des images, tu sais, sur les camemberts.

In this example, the alloquestion *#comment?* is semantically inappropriate since it would not be clear what she was questioning. By contrast, *#comment elle est spécialisée dans les moines?* contains unnecessary repetition of the active VP.

An important variety of the Q alone structure takes the form of Q ça. In the Barnes-Blyth corpus, there are only 2 tokens of this structure uttered by the native speakers of French. In contrast, the non-native speaker incorporated this structure quite frequently into her speech such as in Example 5.29 uttered by the researcher:

Example 5.29

- M. ils ont les meilleurs frozen yogurts, c'est en bas.
E. Oui en bas, oui.
M. Alors ils en ont euh nature, moi je préfère nature
E. mm
M. mais y en a aussi au citron aussi qui sont excellents.
B. **Où ça?**
M. Mais c'est léger. A Saint Anthony Main, en bas. Moi c'est ma meilleure recette

In this context, the open proposition that “the best frozen yogurt is somewhere down there” is highly active. The alloquestions *#où*, *#où c'est*, and *#c'est où* are all pragmatically unacceptable in this context.

Next I examine examples of the Q structure from the Eschmann corpus.

Example 5.30 (from Eschmann Text 6)

- X. Et demain?
B. Eh demain nous travaillons.
A. Nous travaillons.
B. Mais la semaine prochaine nous refaisons grève. Et puis quinze jours après aussi.
X. **Et pourquoi, pourquoi exactement?**
B. Eh bien, pour plusieurs...raisons [...]

- a) Pourquoi exactement?
b) #Pourquoi exactement vous refaites grève?
c) Pourquoi exactement est-ce que vous refaites grève?
d) #Vous refaites grève pourquoi exactement?

This token matches our previous analysis of the Q alone structure. The verb phrase of the open proposition “we go on strike again for x reason” is highly active since it is spoken in the previous utterance. Repeating the verb phrase as seen in the other allosentences is redundant and unnecessary. Contrast this clear example with a more ambiguous utterance:

Example 5.31 (from Eschmann Text 2)

- C. Mais ben alors regarde bien, regarde bien
 A. Défense de photographeur.
 [Laughter]
 A. Il a photographié la défense de photographeur.
 B. **Pourquoi défense de photographeur?**

- a) Pourquoi défense de photographeur?
 b) Pourquoi?
 c) Pourquoi est-ce qu'il a photographié la défense de photographeur?
 d) Pourquoi est-ce qu'il y a une défense de photographeur?
 e) Pourquoi il y a une défense de photographeur?
 f) Il y a une défense de photographeur pourquoi?

There are two potential interpretations of this interrogative as represented in allosentences (c) and (d) based on scope. However, I propose that by not selecting allosentence (b) which would imply meaning (c), the speaker intended the interpretation as in (d). In other words, by repeating the complement, especially without the definite article, the speaker lets us know that the question expression is concerned with an aspect of the presupposition rather than the entire utterance.

5.2 LESS-FREQUENT STRUCTURES

This section treats the structures QV-pro, c'est Q que proV, Q c'est que proV, and Q esq proV. These structures were found to be among the less-frequently used structures in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. In most cases, this low frequency was attributed to a mismatch of socio-stylistic evaluation of the communicative context in relation to the structures' evaluation.

5.2.1 Q Vpro

Although there are certainly vestiges of pronoun inversion in fixed spoken expressions, sociolinguistic factors are essential in its selection. For example, Q Vpro is often an illustration of register shift such as in 'teacherese'. Additionally, in cases where the CP of the open proposition is absurdly highly active to the point of humorousness,

such as in Example 5.32, we find pronoun inversion. This observation indicates that this structure may be used in natural spoken French for an entertaining effect.

Example 5.32

- E. c'est déjà, c'est pas comme New York, hein! Mais alors là vraiment, puis alors, qu'est-ce que, ha! y a énormément d'étrangers, c'est incroyable! Tu vois, j'avais une idée de l'Américain du Minnesota, tu vois le type /inaudible/
C. Ah oui!
M. Ah oui!
E. Ça m'a surpris! Vraiment c'était incroyable! J'ai, ça vraiment a été un choc!
M. Tu as été à New York hein quand même. C'est bien ça.
E. Alors, bon, les gens étaient beaucoup plus petits, déjà, moi j'ai, enfin je sais pas dans quel quartier, j'ai été /laughs/
M. Chinois, mais avoue, avoue! /laughs/ **Où étais-tu?**
E. Dans le quartier chinois /laugh/
C. China Town.

This particular example portrays the language play function discussed in Chapter 4. In this case, the open proposition “you were x place” is highly active and nearly comical. Martine implements a stylistic code-switch for effect.

Does propositional content prefer certain structures over others? In order to treat this inquiry, I examine a near minimal pair from the Barnes-Blyth Corpus. Consider two different interrogative structures with similar propositional content used within a single conversation in which the participants undertake a lively conversation on Mormons. Example 5.33 is *quesque proV* whereas 5.34 is the much more marked *Q Vpro*. In both instances the subject pronoun (*ils*) and the conjugated verb (*font*) are identical.

Example 5.33

- B. Quand nous étions en France, les Mormons venaient nous voir, ah oui
M. Ah! C'est ceux qui s'habillent en cravate et chemise blanche!
B. Voilà! C'est ça!
E. Oui! Oui!
B. Dès que tu vois d'ici, ben en ..en cravate noire
M. /inaudible/
B. cravate et bicyclette, tu sais que c'est des Mormons /laugh/

- E. Ah oui! Ah oui!
- M. **Alors, alors qu'est-ce qu'ils font?**
- E. /inaudible/ alors ils deviennent, viennent chez toi, une fois Maman, alors Maman euh bob euh elle a commencé, euh à discuter, alors là c'est horrible, ne pouvant pas discuter /inaudible/

Example 5.34

- M. Ils sont mormons, et je sais que le vendredi soir ils font quelque chose
- E. Ah ouais.
- M. qui, ils m'ont jamais dit, mais ils font quelque chose /laughs/
- E. Ils font quelque chose! **Que font-ils?**
- M. Et /laughs/ euh voilà.

Although 5.33 and 5.34 come from the same context, they are embedded in different discursive events. In 5.33, M asks the question because she is curious about what Mormons do when they knock on a door in France. In 5.34 E asks the question because M's story has explicitly stated an open proposition (*ils font quelque chose*) without filling in the appropriate information. I propose that it is E's mocking of the explicitness of the open proposition that inspires the use of inversion in this context.

Next I discuss the use of an inverted interrogative in the Eschmann Corpus. In the Barnes-Blyth corpus, pronominal inversion was found to be rare and used in either fixed expressions or in efforts to make a stylistic register change. Consider an example from Text 4 where the young boys were encouraged to act out a scene interrogating a suspect. The utterance in Example 5.35 is the opening line of their dialogue.

Example 5.35 (from Eschmann Text 4)

Alors cette nuit-là, **où étiez-vous?**

- a) Où étiez-vous?
- b) Vous étiez où?
- c) Où vous étiez?
- d) Où est-ce que vous étiez?

It is of critical interest that before the boys began acting, they did not use inversion in their natural speech, yet once the acting began, inversion appeared in their speech. Similar to what happened in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, it appears that these speakers have strong socio-stylistic associations with the inversion structure that they manipulate to distinguish their speech as adult-like and formal. In such a context, allosentences (b) & (c) become stylistically inappropriate; (d) would more appropriate but the inversion structure represents the absolute upper limit of formality.

5.2.2 Q c'est que proV

C'est-clefts are powerful pragmatic tools in spoken French with a subtle socio-stylistic effect. There are only two occurrences of this form in the Blyth-Barnes corpus. This structure is stylistically inappropriate for the Barnes-Blyth Corpus. When it is used, the fronted clefted structure indicates intimacy via style shifting.

Example 5.36

- E. Oh y en a qui ont drôlement du travail!/inaudible/
M. Attends! Martha et Debby
C. Ouais./inaudible/
M. elles, elles ont assisté, elles assistent Madame
C. M.B.!
E. M.B.!
M. B., et ben, elles e /shushing noises/, il faut /inaudible/ tout le livre et il faut qu'ils fassent des discussions de groupe chaque semaine, et qu'ils corrigent les devoirs.
E. /inaudible/ c'est ce qui m'est arrivé. C'est pour ça que
M. **et qui c'est que tu avais?**
E. R., bon Monsieur R. Bon alors j'ai corrigé
M. Et c'était dur?
E. ben j'ai corrigé le mid-term

In the above Barnes-Blyth Corpus example, the open proposition is active. This particular interrogative could have appeared as *c'est qui que tu avais?*, *tu avais qui?* or

qui tu avais? In fact, according to pragmatic factors outlined above, the alternatives appear to be more appropriate than the uttered interrogative.

On the web, especially in chat rooms or on blogs, the Q in COMP cleft structure is quite common:

Example 5.37

Comment c'est que ça va??

In the on-line example, the interrogative structure implies intimacy and genuine interest. The *c'est Q que proV* variant is not possible in this case: *#c'est comment que ça va?* due to the resulting change in interpretation.

Unfortunately, in the Barnes-Blyth corpus there were too few clefted interrogatives to allow for an indepth analysis or understanding of their function. The utterance in 5.38 exemplifies the use of the structure *Q c'est que pro V*. In this dissertation, this structure has been labeled an informal variant, even in comparison to its *in situ* clefted counterpart.

Example 5.38 (from Eschmann Text 5)

- O. ... à (12345)
Z. Oui (12345)
O. J'suis à (PPPPP)
Z. Monsieur (AAAAA)?
O. Je suis à (PPPPP)
Z. Ah ben c'est bien, c'est bien
O. Monsieur (AAAAA), où c'est qu'il est?
Z. Au terminus.
O. Mais je vois pas.

- a) où il est?
b) il est où
c) où est-ce qu'il est
d) c'est où qu'il est

Text 5 had many tokens of interrogatives involving a pronoun, the verb *être* and the question expression *où*. It appears that the clefted structure was used in this particular utterance for emphasis.

5.2.3 *c'est Q que proV*

This section focuses on the *in situ* cleft in Spoken French. Although this structure, like *Q c'est que proV* was not employed with great frequency in the corpus, it is hypothesized that its sociolinguistic evaluation is higher. It is important to note that all four *c'est Q que pro V* structures are attributed to the same speaker, Martine.

This clefted structure and the *proV Q* structure both place the question words *in situ*. It is of interest to note that the same question words that prefer the *proV Q* form are also found in this clefted structure. Of the four examples in the corpus, three are with the question word *quand*. In addition, the two *in situ* structures perform similar pragmatic functions: they are used when asking about something highly presupposed. This construction may indicate that what is found in the relative clause is highly activated; this property is what permits the accommodation in Example 5.39. In contrast, the *proV Q* structure is possible with less presupposed elements. Its infrequency in the Barnes-Blyth corpus gives it a special stylistic and intimate status in this particular context.

Example 5.39

- C. Ach! Arrête, j'ai mal aux dents! /inaudible/
M. Mais toi tu as, tu es, tu tu nous couves quelque chose, hein! Entre les dents et le coeur! Elle nous prépare quelque chose, elle. **C'est quand que tu as rendez-vous chez le dentiste?**
C. /inaudible/] Lundi.

In the above example, we have no available context to let us know that a dentist appointment had been discussed previously. We are left with two possibilities: There had

been a previous discussion about a dentist appointment but they had not yet discussed the time or there was no previous discussion but Martine was taking advantage of the construction to indicate that she'd better have a dentist appointment or else she was a fool. As a result, the allosentence *#c'est quand?* would be incomprehensible.

5.2.4 Q esq pro V

As defined in this dissertation, the *Q esq pro V* structure may be realized with any adverbial question expression or the pronoun *qui*. As discussed in the syntax section, *Q esq pro V* is not frequently employed as a possible variant for *c'est quoi* or *c'est où* in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. In fact, there are only 3 tokens of this structure in the corpus. This result is perhaps the most surprising of the study. The question words in the three structures (*comment* and *pourquoi*) are the same question words associated with the fronted *Q proV* structure. What is the difference between *Q proV* and *Q esq proV*? From the limited tokens we have, it is striking that all three comprise very long and involved questions. Basically, there is a question word followed by *est-ce que* then a long-winded question.

Example 5.40

- C. Mais c'est dingue!
- E. Alors là vraiment
- M. qui assistent Madame B.!
- C. Mais c'est dingue, **comment est-ce que euh est-ce qu'on peut nous donner**
- M. Ce que je comprends pas
- C. **la responsabilité de, de de, de corriger des copies**
- M. quand on a juste une connaissance, enfin de
- C. **sur un cours, qu'on on**
- M. Un cours où les gens ils payent euh quand même cinquante dollars le crédit, je sais pas combien, et et on a aucun /inaudible/ c'est un cours, un cours trois mille hein, ça veut dire qu'ils vont bientôt avoir leur license!

This prototypical example involves an interrogative that continues over and through several conversational turns. The proV Q structure is clearly not possible in this situation since the SVC portion is too long and in fact incomplete *#on peut nous donner la responsabilité de corriger des copies sur un cours comment?* The more likely option *comment on peut nous donner la responsabilité de corriger des copies sur un cours...* is possible but not optimal because the question gets lost without the reinforcement.

I now examine the use of Q esq pro V in the Eschmann corpus. This structure had very few tokens in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. As discussed previously, it is difficult to tell if this finding is consistent with previous studies since in this dissertation, the question word *quesque* is not included in this category. According to the present analyses, the Q esq pro V structure may be used in contexts requiring politeness or chosen for emphasis.

Example 5.41 (from Eschmann Text 5)

- Z. Dis voir, monsieur (AAAAA).
 OA. **Quand est-ce qu'ils viennent pour me dépanner?**
 Z. Ben quand est-ce qu'il viennent? [...]

- a) ?Quand ils viennent pour me dépanner?
 b) Ils viennent quand pour me dépanner?
 c) Quand viennent-ils pour me dépanner?

He uttered this question after first being told to hold his question while another driver spoke with the dispatcher. Indeed, this particular utterance emphasizes the expectation (yet the polite expectation) that someone is coming to fix the problem. The use of the question word *quand* may also play a role in the choice of using this particular structure since as mentioned in Chapter 4, its grammatical function may be ambiguous when in COMP.

5.3 QUESTIONS ABOUT SUBJECTS

The *qui V* structure category only has one token in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. By definition, only the question word *qui* is possible in this structure. This structure is considered an *in situ* structure since the question word is found in the subject position. Are the tendencies discussed for the post-verbal *in situ* form applicable to the pre-verbal *in situ* form? Or are we working with an independent system only relevant for questioning the subject? Observe the only token from the corpus seen in Example 5.42:

Example 5.42

- C.E. Que la maîtresse de maison commence à prendre le verre
C. Après on prend le verre /laughs/
B. Oh c'est incroyable!
M. Qu'elle s'américanise! /inaudible/
B. Bon alors /laughs/
C. Non je ne serai pas la première!
M. Vous avez vu le réflexe de punition .. et aussitôt elle l'a reposé
C. /laughs/ Allez prenez-le là /laughs/
E. **Ah qui commence?**
C. Ah! Je commence pas la première!

In this example, the participants are reluctant to drink their drinks until Betsy has a drink in accordance with their acknowledged French etiquette guidelines. Finally out of joking exasperation, Evelyne asks “who is going to begin?” In this context, there is a fixed number of people who could possibly drink first (minus Christine who had just refused). The open proposition ‘X commence’ is highly active. But Evelyne does not know the answer to her question. A possible alternative for this structure is *qui est-ce qui commence?* a structure that also occurs in the corpus.

There are 3 occurrences of the *qui esqui V* structure in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. One is reported speech, the other is part of a joke (Example 5.43) and the third is

transformed into a yes-no question (Example 5.44). Notice the humorous finger-pointing in the following example:

Example 5.43

- E. Ah moi je bois énormément c'est pour ça que, je bois de l'eau parce que
M. Mais c'est desséché, toi tu as le style desséché
E. Non mais dis donc! /laughs/ Tu es complètement folle, hein! /laughs/
M. **Oui ben qui est-ce qui, a parlé de sa graisse tout à l'heure hein?**
/laughs, inaudible/
E. Je n'ai pas parlé de sa graisse, je n'ai pas été si /inaudible/

The above example has a rhetorical slant to it. In this case, we know by the very structure of the interrogative that there is someone who spoke earlier. Plus, it appears that the speaker M already knows the answer to her question. A possible alternative for this utterance is *qui a parlé de sa graisse tout à l'heure?* but this variant lacks the emphasis on the question word which is essential to the humor of the interrogative. In addition, this alloquestion goes against the no focal subject principle in French.

There is no post-verbal variant for this particular structure, so our guidelines for question word in COMP versus post-verb *in situ* are not applicable. The relationship between this *quiesqui V* structure and direct yes/no questions is very close; for instance instead of asking “who wants wine?” it is possible to ask “do you want wine?” Example 5.44 contains an utterance with both types of questions.

Example 5.44

- M. Mais euh oui et comme je disais, faudra que tu nous expliques un jour, où où ça se trouve et comment y aller
E. mm
M. parce que moi je suis à la recherche de lard.
E. Ouais tu sais tu es vite tu connais pas Surdyk's?
M. Non moi je connais pas.
E. **Qui est-ce qui connaît, tu connais Surdyk's?**
M. C'est, c'est dans /inaudible/ de Dinky Town

In the above context, Evelyne abandons her original question WH-interrogative and switches to a yes-no question with little change in outcome except the latter creates a better guarantee for an answer.

The next token from the Eschmann corpus exemplifies a question on an animate subject. As noted earlier, there were few questions on animate subjects in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, but it is believed that this low frequency is representative of general constraints on subject focus.

Example 5.45 (from Eschmann Text 2)

- A. Moi je propose qu'on les (re) fasse encadrer
- B. (????) affiche grandeur nature
- A. ... ou alors on les tire à plusieurs exemplaires et on dédicace.
- D. Ah oui, comme ce matin.
- A. On accorde des autographes.
- B. Oh la dame, aie le ciel.
- X. A qui?
- A. Euh à tous les gars qui feront la queue pour avoir...
- B. (????) aussi à nos admirateurs.
- C. Mais qu'est-ce qu'il a voulu dire par là?
- [Laughter]
- C. On est bien nature oui.
- D. (????)
- A. Ah ben on peut...ça on peut...très bien...Ah nous sommes bêtes.
- B. **Qui est-ce qui les fabrique qu'on les...**
- A. Du bateau.
- B. **qu'on lui fasse des compliments?**
- D. Mais toujours papa (JJJJ).

- a) Qui les fabrique qu'on lui fasse des compliments?
- b) Qui c'est qui les fabrique qu'on lui fasse des compliments?
- c) C'est qui qui les fabrique qu'on lui fasse des compliments?

The context of this particular example is difficult to ascertain due to overlapping conversations just prior to the utterance of the interrogative. Nevertheless, the discernably

relevant aspect of this interrogative is its communicative function- this question has a rhetorical and humorous characteristic.

The *quesqui* structure is used to ask about inanimate subjects. In all 4 occurrences of this structure in the corpus, the verb is *se passer*. This particular verb does not permit a structural variant except for the stylistically inappropriate pronoun inversion: *que se passe-t-il?* In Example 5.46 the *quesqui* interrogative is uttered twice.

Example 5.46

- M. Et puis et puis alors euh, Papa me disait, saut en hauteur, co, combien, combien tu as? Un mètre euh, et puis j'ai dit, ben, ben non euh
- E. Non.
- M. Je sais pas.
- E. C'était pas mon jour!
- C. J'ai trop bu, j'ai trop bu! /laughs/
- M. Il dit mais enfin, **qu'est-ce qui se passe? Qu'est-ce qui se passe?** Tu avais peur? Qu'est-ce /laughs/ Alors j'ai dit ben, j'avais, j'ai eu soif /laughs/ Il me dit, comment?! Tu as bu! Avant de sauter! /Laughs/ J'ai dit, oh, un peu, un peu. Ah, c'était atroce, j'ai reçu la fessée.
- E. /laugh/
- C. Oh?
- M. Oui, pour avoir bu avant, avant de sauter, de faire du saut en hauteur.

This example is reported, quoted speech that according to our guidelines prefers a fronted structure. However, there is no available post-verbal variant in the case of *qu'est-ce qui se passe?* In contrast, in the unattested interrogative: *qu'est-ce qui est sur la table?* a possible *in situ* near-variant would be *c'est quoi sur la table?*

5.4 UNATTESTED STRUCTURES

There were several structures described in Chapter 3 but not found in the Barnes-Blyth corpus including Q que proV, Q c'est que c'est que proV and Q esq c'est que pro V. This dearth highlights an unfortunate drawback of the method of analysis chosen for this dissertation.

Indeed, socio-stylistic restrictions account for the lack of *Q que proV* in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. This particular structure has a strong substandard association that was not appropriate for the somewhat more formal communicative context of the Barnes-Blyth corpus. Use of this structure also implies a certain degree of intimacy between the interlocutors. Similar socio-stylistic restrictions may account for the lack of recursive structures in the corpus. Perhaps then it is no surprise that *Q c'est que c'est que pro V* and *Q esq c'est que pro V* are also commonly overlooked in the literature.

There are also no attested examples of *qui qui V* in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. This structure is deemed stylistically inappropriate for the Barnes-Blyth corpus. It may also be considered marginal or infantile. There is an example of the *qui c'est qui V* structure in the Eschmann corpus.

Example 5.47 (Eschmann Text 2)

- A. Ah c'est (FFFFF) qui plonge...oh mais attendez y a mieux que...
- D. Ah il plongera (FFFFF).
- C. Regarde, ça c'est (GGGGG) [(????)]
- A. [Alors ce plongeur] est (HHHHH)
- B. Celui est un peu bizarre.
- D. **Qui c'est qui (s'y s'y) plonge là?**
- A. C'est (HHHHH).

- a) Qui est-ce qui s'y plonge là?
- b) Qui s'y plonge là?
- c) C'est qui qui s'y plonge là?

In the discussion prior to the interrogative at hand, there is already much discussion centering on the identity of the divers in photographs. It appears that Speaker A has already stated the information that Speaker D is seeking in the interrogative. Additionally, this particular structure is used as part of a general avoidance of the *qui qui V* structure.

Given the low-frequency of all animate subject questions in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, it is clearly impractical to make any conclusions on their usage. This particular type of questions calls for a different approach for data collection and analysis since they are infrequent across the board in communication.

5.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The goal of this chapter was to describe and analyze the functions and use of each WH-interrogative introduced in Chapter 3 as used in spoken French. For each structure, the relevance and importance of the factors presented in Chapter 4 were evaluated. The degree of substance in the description of each structure's use and function was dictated by the frequency of occurrence in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. In an initial attempt to verify the validity of the hypotheses on the function of particular interrogative structures, I looked at tokens from the Eschmann corpus. Overall, the proposed rubrics for understanding interrogative use were able to account for the data (although admittedly post-facto) in the secondary corpus.

In summary, here are general pragmatic trends associated with the three most common structures in the Blyth-Barnes corpus:

Q proV: low answerability (*pourquoi, comment*); question marking; low activation of open proposition, unexpected

ProV Q: high answerability (*où, quand*); high activation of open proposition; expected

Q: high or low answerability, high or low activation (depending on the function)

The interrogative structures that did not appear in the Barnes-Blyth corpus were speculated to have a very informal sociolinguistic status to be further explored in a larger corpus.

Chapter 6: An Optimality Theory Analysis

In this chapter, I propose using an Optimality Theory framework to clarify the interactions of the components of grammar discussed in Chapter 4. In that chapter, I claimed that WH-Interrogative structure variation is involved in the interplay of several components of grammar. Optimality Theory by definition accounts for combinations of constraints from various components of grammar but also allows for stylistic re-rankings that are essential to understanding interrogative usage in spoken French. This dissertation and the subsequent incorporation of Optimality Theory are both driven by the idea that if there exists more than one form, then it is economical to use them for differing interpretations.

6.1 BACKGROUND

Optimality Theory (henceforth OT) is a formal theory of constraint interaction. It proposes a relation between input and output that is mediated by an output GENERATOR (GEN) an EVALUATION system (EVAL) and a CONSTRAINT system (CON). For a given input, GEN creates the set of potential outputs. EVAL selects the best output from the set based on a language specific ranking of CON: the universal set of constraints. OT relies on the interaction of constraints which by definition are universal yet violable. Each constraint is either a faithfulness or markedness statement concerning some aspect of language. Grammars are rankings of constraints. OT claims a single constraint inventory exists in other words, constraints from different components of grammar may be crucially ranked with respect to each other. Therefore, for the purposes of this dissertation, OT predicts a successful interface between syntax and pragmatics and other areas discussed

in Chapter 4. Also crucial to this study is the fact that OT is not a substantive theory; in other words, it is compatible with differing views on syntax and pragmatics etc.

Pesetksy (1997) posed a critical question: “is OT merely a theory of phonology?” Although that is clearly not the case, his question represents an initial reluctance on the part of linguists to expand the theory beyond the relative tidiness of phonological units. Indeed, OT began as a phonological theory with the presentations and work by Alan Prince and Paul Smolensky. Nevertheless, studies and discussions concerning OT and syntax (see Barbosa et al 1998, Müller & Sternefeld 2001, Legendre et al. 2001) as well as OT and pragmatics (see Blutner and Zeevat 2004) have grown significantly over the past few years.

Unquestionably, OT faces some difficult challenges when applied above the phonological level. In his state-of-the art OT guide, McCarthy (2002) summarizes several of these problems for OT. First, what is the input? There is no unified answer to this question especially concerning the type and amount of information contained in the input. Second, how do faithfulness constraints work? Third, how do we treat optionality? Optionality is defined as: some input /A/ maps onto two or more outputs [B], [C]. Classic OT says that the optional alternates must incur identical violation marks from all the constraints in CON. This identical violation prediction is an unlikely occurrence. Another method involves Constraint Ties where the ranking can be reordered. In contrast, it is also possible that [B] and [C] have different inputs. Another relevant question involves defining variation, a concept which must reflect differences in ranking. One suggested approach claims that a grammar is a *partial ordering* of CON (attributed to Paul Kiparsky, 1993) where constraints that conflict may be unranked with respect to one another, leading to variation in output. An alternative approach is Boersma’s *continuous ranking scale* (1997, 1998).

Indeed the complexities of variability that commonly plague linguists do not disappear in the implementation of Optimality Theory. Much attention in recent years has been paid to the possibility of OT to deal with variability in a coherent manner. Even so, Nagy and Reynolds (1996) provide an important caveat: “It is not sufficient to say that, by using Optimality Theory, we can still get many of the results that derivational models were able to get previously” (p. 159). In contrast, we are challenged to determine whether or not OT can take us further in our understanding. The sub-sections that follow survey how previous studies have dealt with the complications of OT at the phrasal level.

6.1.1 OT and Interrogatives

There is general and cross-linguistic interest in OT analysis of interrogatives since they have long proved an interesting syntactic puzzle. There are two common threads in OT interrogative analyses. The first is optionality, which as mentioned above is not unique to interrogatives, but is an issue inherent in syntax. How can OT account for more than one possible surface structure for any given context? A second issue in OT interrogative analyses are the constraints which determine the position of the question expression, whether in a fronted position or *in situ*. The competing constraints in this position as originally formulated by Grimshaw (1997) are STAY (Trace is not allowed) and OP-SPEC (syntactic operators must be in specifier position). The former discourages WH-movement whereas the latter encourages it.

Ackema and Neeleman (1995, 1998) rely on the ranking and re-rankings of three constraints to explain multiple WH-question formation that are also relevant to single WH interrogatives. They define the constraints as follows:

Q-Marking: A question must be overtly Q-marked where marking requires VP to be the complement of the Q-Marker.

Q-Scope: [+Q] elements must c-command VP at surface structure.

Both of the above constraints may trigger WH-movement but they are not both crucially satisfied in all cases. The first two constraints contrast with an anti-movement constraint:

Stay: Do not move where the longer the distance between chain links, the more violations result.

They exhibit the role of these constraints in WH-questions with the following tableau (their #7 p. 18, 1998):

Tableau 6.1

	Q-marking	Stay	Q-Scope
☛What have you seen?		*****	
You have seen what?	*!		*
What you have seen?	*!	**	
Have you seen what?	*!	*	*

They acknowledge that there is significant overlap in the effects of the constraints Q-Marking and Q-Scope on violations. However they justify this differentiation by the third candidate in Tableau 6.1 where WH-movement satisfies Q-Scope but the lack of head movement violates Q-Marking. A weakness in their analysis is the absence of any discussion of input, which is blatantly omitted in their tableaux, especially problematic for the interpretation of their faithfulness constraint.

Nevertheless, Ackema and Neeleman's analysis works adequately for languages in which there is not more than one interrogative pattern per register. French, a language with more than one syntactic interrogative pattern poses a potential problem for their analysis. They claim: "it appears that the different structures [of French] belong to different registers of the language (1988, p. 31), so there is no grammar-internal

optionality. I maintain that this view is incorrect given the hypothesis put forward in Chapter 4 of this dissertation that several different syntactic patterns represent pragmatic rather than stylistic differences.

Schmid (2001) uses French interrogatives as one of the major illustrations in her discussion on resolving optionality. She compares two types of solutions for optionality: the global tie approach and the neutralization approach. The former is based on a singular competition containing constraint ties where both rankings are allowed and the latter on separate competitions due to slightly different inputs. In her paper, she seeks to explain this data set:

Qui as-tu vu?
Tu as vu qui?
Qui tu as vu?
*As-tu vu qui?

She proceeds from the claim that (a) occurs in standard French whereas (b) and (c) occur in colloquial French. Her main interest is explaining the optionality between (b) and (c) in colloquial French.

For the global tie approach, she employs the analysis and constraints proposed by Ackema and Neeleman (1998) except she chooses the term Shortest Path Condition from Ackema and Neeleman (1995) instead of STAY. She thereby acknowledges that the role of input was not explicitly treated in Ackema and Neeleman but determines that it is not necessarily relevant for the approach.

For Standard French, according to the global tie approach, the ranking is as follows: Qmark>>SPC<>Q-Scope. Consider a reproduction of the corresponding tableau below (Schmid's Ex 31 p. 298). This tied ranking yields a single optimal candidate.

Tableau 6.2

	Q-Mark	SPC	Q-Scope
☛ a. Qui ₁ as ₂ -tu t ₂ vu t ₁		*****	
b. Tu as vu qui	*!		*
c. Qui ₁ tu as vu t ₁	*!	***	
d. As ₁ -tu t ₁ vu qui	*!	***	*

In contrast, the global tie ranking in colloquial French is: SPC < > Q-Scope >> Q-Mark. Following is Schmid's tableau (her Example 33 p, 299).

Tableau 6.3

	SPC	Q-Scope	Q-Mark
a. Qui ₁ as ₂ -tu t ₂ vu t ₁	*(!)***(!)**		
☛ b. Tu as vu qui		*(!)	*
☛ c. Qui ₁ tu as vu t ₁	*(!)**		*
d. As ₁ -tu t ₁ vu qui	*(!)**	*(!)	*

It is for colloquial French that the constraint tie between SPC and Q-Scope yields two optimal candidates among which the ultimate choice depends on the ranking between SPC and Q-Scope.

In contrast, for the neutralization approach to optionality, Schmid introduces a faithfulness constraint that is sensitive to an input feature:

FAITH [Q]: The output value of [Q] is the same as the input value

She assumes that [Q] is a syntactic feature that may (+) or may not (-) be connected with a WH-element in the input. She stipulates that for this approach, WH-element analysis is independent of the existence of a [Q] feature.

For Standard French, the ranking is as follows: Q-Mark >>Faith [Q], and Q-Mark >>SPC. For the first tableau, the input has a Q+ feature whereas in the second it has no Q feature in the input. The tableaux below are Schmid's Examples 36 and 37:

Tableau 6.4

Input: [+Q]	Q-Mark	Faith [Q]	Q-Scope	SPC
☛ a. Qui _[+] ₁ as ₂ -tu t ₂ vu t ₁				*****
b. Tu as vu qui _[-]	*!	*		
c. Qui _[+] ₁ tu as vu t ₁	*!			***
d. As ₁ -tu t ₁ vu qui _[-]	*!	*		***
e. Qui _[-] ₁ as ₂ -tu t ₂ vu t ₁	*!	*		*****
f. Tu as vu qui _[+]	*!		*	
g. Qui _[-] ₁ tu as vu t ₁	*!	*		***
h. As ₁ -tu t ₁ vu qui _[+]	*!		*	***

Tableau 6.5

Input: [-Q]	Q-Mark	Faith [Q]	Q-Scope	SPC
☛ a. Qui _[+] ₁ as ₂ -tu t ₂ vu t ₁		*		*****
b. Tu as vu qui _[-]	*!			
c. Qui _[+] ₁ tu as vu t ₁	*!	*		***
d. As ₁ -tu t ₁ vu qui _[-]	*!			***
e. Qui _[-] ₁ as ₂ -tu t ₂ vu t ₁	*!			*****
f. Tu as vu qui _[+]	*!	*	*	
g. Qui _[-] ₁ tu as vu t ₁	*!			***
h. As ₁ -tu t ₁ vu qui _[+]	*!	*	*	***

Note that in Tableaux 6.4 and 6.5 the optimal candidate remains the same regardless of the faithfulness value due to the highest ranking of Q-Mark.

For colloquial French the ranking is as follows: Faith[Q] >>Q-Scope>>SPC>>Q-Mark. Tableaux 6.6 and 6.7 are reproductions of Schmid's Examples 39 and 40:

Tableau 6.6

Input: [+Q]	Faith[Q]	Q-Scope	SPC	Q-Mark
a. Qui _[+1] as ₂ -tu t ₂ vu t ₁			****!*	
b. Tu as vu qui _[+]	*!			*
c. Qui _[+1] tu as vu t ₁			***	*
d. As ₁ -tu t ₁ vu qui _[+]	*!		***	*
e. Qui _[+1] as ₂ -tu t ₂ vu t ₁	*!		*****	*
f. Tu as vu qui _[+]		*!		*
g. Qui _[+1] tu as vu t ₁	*!		***	*
h. As ₁ -tu t ₁ vu qui _[+]		*!	***	*

Tableau 6.7

Input: [-Q]	Faith[Q]	Q-Scope	SPC	Q-Mark
a. Qui _[+1] as ₂ -tu t ₂ vu t ₁	*!		*****	
b. Tu as vu qui _[+]				*
c. Qui _[+1] tu as vu t ₁	*!		***	*
d. As ₁ -tu t ₁ vu qui _[+]			*!*	*
e. Qui _[+1] as ₂ -tu t ₂ vu t ₁			*!*****	*
f. Tu as vu qui _[+]	*!	*		*
g. Qui _[+1] tu as vu t ₁			*!*	
h. As ₁ -tu t ₁ vu qui _[+]	*!	*	***	*

In contrast with the results of approach for Standard French, the neutralization approach yields two different optimal candidates depending on the [Q] value.

Schmid's own conclusion is that the two accounts of optionality are empirically equivalent, but that neutralization is conceptually superior. Her global tie approach analysis simply represents application of the Ackema and Neeleman approach to French data. Any weaknesses of this implementation are flaws of the original schema. Several drawbacks are apparent in her neutralization approach. First the choice of a faithfulness constraint based on the syntactic representation of the question word is problematic. Her assumption that it is possible to evaluate an interrogative without a Q feature is counter-

intuitive. There is also a striking problem with her ranking suggestions in the neutralization approach since they run counter to basic assumptions of the interaction of faithfulness and style which would predict that faithfulness would be higher ranked in standard French than in colloquial French. Nevertheless, Schmid's overall analysis improves upon Ackema and Neeleman's conclusion that there is no grammar-internal optionality in French by explaining the patterning of two forms in a single register. However, she relies on the assumption that there are no pragmatic differences between Q proV and proV Q. Instead her explanation relies on supposed free variation between the two colloquial forms. It is important to bear in mind that her focus is not to understand interrogatives *per se*, but to clarify optionality in the OT framework.

Legendre (1998, 2001) discusses the issue of (apparent) interrogative optionality within the context of French WH-question typology. She claims that the various WH-questions reflect register differences such that in colloquial French WH-questions are not fronted. In her examples given below (2001, p. 18) the two question types involve a constraint re-ranking such that example 'a' is optimal under STAY >> OPSPEC whereas 'b' is optimal under OPSPEC>>STAY. OPSPEC requires WH-operators to be in Spec position. Example 'a' is an *in situ* structure whereas example 'b' is complex inversion.

- a. Pierre est parti où?
- b. Où Pierre est-il parti?

I have placed her analysis in the Tableaux 6.8 and 6.9 respectively. Note that her analysis is more focused on the constraint re-ranking than on the information available in the input.

Tableau 6.8. Colloquial French: STAY >> OPSPEC

	STAY	OPSPEC
☛ Pierre est parti où?		*
Où Pierre est-il parti?	*!	

Tableau 6.9. Formal French: OPSPEC>>STAY

	OPSPEC	STAY
☛ Où Pierre est-il parti?		*
Pierre est parti où?	*!	

Legendre's choice of stylistic re-rankings makes for a clean (if oversimplified) explanation of register variation. Note that neither of the candidates resembles utterances found in the Barnes-Blyth corpus; candidate 'a' comprises the proper noun *Pierre* and candidate 'b' involves a complex inversion structure.

Dekkers (1997) in analyzing variable French interrogative word order uses four constraints from the containment era:

EPP (Extended Projection Principle): SpecIP must be filled

CASE: Parse constituents in their case position

PARSE-scope: Parse constituents in their scope position

STAY: Traces are not allowed.

In his analysis, he uses the ranking Parse-scope>>EPP>>STAY<>CASE. With this ranking, for instance, stylistic inversion satisfies EPP whereas the Q in COMP structures avoids a violation of PARSE-scope. His analysis provides no substantial departure from the studies presented thus far.

Bakovic (1998) analyzes optimality and inversion in Spanish in a study that looks at syntax, semantics and variation. He observes an implicational relationship among WH-phrase types and inversion when the WH-expressions are sub-divided as 1) arguments (*quién* and *qué*) 2) location (*dónde* and *cuándo*) 3) manner (*cómo*) and 4) reason (*por qué*). Their different behavior prompted him to propose a markedness subhierarchy where each WH-phrase type has a different OP-SPEC constraint (p. 39 #7):

- a. ARGOP-SPEC: Argument operators must be in specifier position
- b. LOCOP-SPEC: Location operators must be in specifier position
- c. MANOP-SPEC: Manner operators must be in specifier position
- d. REASOP-SPEC: Reason operators must be in specifier position.

This analysis is of interest since it follows an observation that not all question words behave the same in Spanish, as is the case in French. This type of markedness hierarchy is explored further in my analysis of French interrogatives in Section 6.3.

Many interrogative analyses incorporate effects of WH-movement. As stipulated in Chapter 3, I do not incorporate a theory of movement in this dissertation. Issues taken care of by the constraint STAY are thereby to be settled by other means. As can be seen from this discussion on OT and interrogatives, there have been no OT analyses of French interrogatives that take into account the totality of the functions of each form. OT and interrogatives have to this point relied on a purely socio-stylistic understanding of the variation.

6.1.2 OT and Pragmatics

Up until quite recently, the integration of OT and pragmatics or information structure was relatively sparse. Hajicová (2000) discusses the possibilities and limits of OT for pragmatics. Grimshaw and Samek-Lodovici (1995) recommend adding focus and

topic information to the input. Samek-Lodovici (1988) discusses OT, word order and expression of Focus.

In recent years, researchers such as Blutner, Zeevat, de Hoop, Hendriks and Jäger (see Blutner et al 2006, Jäger 2000 etc) have brought the OT and semantico-pragmatic interaction to the forefront. Blutner (2000) introduced the concept of bidirectionality in OT. Bidirectionality involves simultaneously the perspective of both the speaker and the listener- two essential components of semantics and pragmatics. Blutner and Zeevat (2004) outline four main pragmatic constraints: 1) Do Not Accommodate 2) Economy 3) Relevance 4) Strength. Economy and Relevance are of particular interest to the present study.

Cases where information structure has been invoked in OT papers have often been related to the syntactic and pragmatic phenomenon known as ‘scrambling’. Of particular relevance to this dissertation is the work of Choi (1996,2001) who uses and proposes constraints from more than one component of grammar in her analysis of scrambling in Korean and German. Representing one component of grammar, she uses the syntactic or structural constraint CANONICAL which is a family of constraints divided into CN1 and CN2:

CANON:

CN1: SUBJ should be structurally more prominent than (e.g. c-command) non-SUBJ functions

CN2: Non-SUBJ functions align reversely with the c-structure according to the functional hierarchy

This constraint prefers the order of SUBJ-Indirect Obj- Direct Obj with cumulative violation effect.

Choi's pragmatic constraints are formulated based on the information structure work of Vallduví (1990). Her interpretation of his work involves four information units (topic, tail, completive focus and contrastive focus) as follows:

Topic + Tail = (GROUND) = [-NEW]

Completive Focus + Contrastive Focus = (FOCUS)= [+NEW]

The resulting constraints are NEW and PROM:

NEW: A [-New] element should precede a [+New] element

PROM: A [+Prom] element should precede a [-Prom] element where prominent info is topic & contrastive focus

She then combines the structural and information structure constraints in the overall rankings. For German, she proposes the following ranking:

PROM >> CN1 >> {NEW, CN2}. A case of Ground-Focus exemplifies the interaction of these constraints (her Example 48 p. 166):

Tableau 6.10

	CANDIDATES	PM	CN1	NW	CN2
☛ a.	Hans dem SCHÜLER das Buch			*	
☛ b.	Hans das Buch dem SCHÜLER				*
c.	dem SCHÜLER Hans das Buch		*	**	
d.	das Buch Hans dem SCHÜLER		*		*
e.	dem SCHÜLER das Buch Hans		**	**	
f.	das Buch dem SCHÜLER Hans		**	*	*

The context in this case is what Choi labels a normal question and answer pair.

The assumed question and two acceptable answers are:

Wem hat Hans das Buch gegeben?

Ich glaube daB Hans dem SCHÜLER das Buch gegeben hat.

Ich glaube daB Hans das Buch dem SCHÜLER gegeben hat.

One of the difficulties described above involving the application of Optimality Theory at the sentence level is the definition of the input. Choi, similar to Bresnan (1996), defined input as a set of lexical heads with a skeletal f-structure showing how the heads are related to each other. In addition, what is particularly important in Choi's dissertation is her assumption that information structure features are encoded in the input (although separate from her tableaux). So, in her case, each element in the f-skeleton is labeled according the information structure features [New] and [Prom]. The information structure input for the three major elements represented in the tableau is shown in Table 6.1 (her 47):

Table 6.1

Hans	dem SCHÜLER	das Buch
[-New, -Prom]	[+New, -Prom]	[-New, -Prom]
Ground	Focus	Ground

Choi's work achieves integrating pragmatic and syntactic constraints into an analysis. Additionally she succeeds in illustrating a syntactic phenomenon without dependence on movement typology. French interrogatives are inherently more complex than scrambling in German since they involve question expressions with semantic differences as well as syntactic additions and subtractions.

6.1.3 OT and Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics, a discipline that views variation as a prime focus of language study, requires the possibility of variable and gradient linguistic outputs in Optimality

Theory. Espinosa (2004) inspects meaningful variability and concludes that the Boersma & Hayes (2001) continuous ranking approach to variation is the best fit for sociolinguistic understanding. Van Oostendorp (1997) evaluates style levels within generative grammar and OT. His main suggestion concerns the central role of faithfulness constraints in style level analysis. His hypothesis is as follows: The more formal the style, the higher ranked the faithfulness constraints. In the paper, he re-examines the popular phenomenon of liaison in French. He finds that the hypothesis correctly predicts liaison usage.

Sells et al (1996) attempt to bridge what they call the gap between advances in variation studies and the methodology of current generative theory, in particular OT. They study the context of variation in negative inversion in AAVE. They believe that OT is a fruitful way of analyzing areas of variation that have been heretofore unresolved. In addition, the use of recorded data as well as native speaker intuitions help refine the theoretical instrument.

Accounting for variation in a meaningful and disciplined way has always been a challenge in linguistics. Understanding how the sociolinguistic component of grammar interacts with the semantic, syntactic and pragmatic components in interrogative use represents a central inquiry of this dissertation. OT exhibits impressive potential for this very task.

6.2 PROPOSED OT ANALYSIS OF INTERROGATIVES IN FRENCH

French interrogatives pose particular difficulties for an OT analysis. First, as mentioned throughout this dissertation, the study of interrogatives crucially involves language on the syntactic and discourse level. Second is the fact that interrogatives present a case of variation where more than one output may be appropriate in a certain

context. Third is the fact that register plays a special role in the choice of interrogative structure.

In the beginning of the preceding section, several problems associated with OT syntax were introduced involving input, faithfulness, optionality and variation. These issues must be addressed for a sound account of any phenomenon at the phrasal level.

The analysis that follows relies on a combination of markedness and faithfulness constraints related to several components of grammar. Issues of optionality treated by Schmid and others are often resolved when pragmatic constraints are introduced. Finally in regards to stylistic variation the approach here is the introduction of constraints related to register based on shared communicative knowledge.

In 6.2.1 below I establish the input then one relevant faithfulness constraint needed to provide an analysis for interrogative utterances. In Sections 6.2.2-3, I seek to explain the choice amongst seven types of interrogatives attested in the Barnes-Blyth corpus:

Q proV (*Où tu vas?*)
proV Q (*Tu vas où?*)
Q (*Où?*)
Q esq proV (*Où est-ce que tu vas?*)
Q Vpro (*Où vas-tu?*)
Q c'est que pro V (*Où c'est que tu vas?*)
C'est Q que proV (*C'est où que tu vas?*)

I claimed in Chapter 4 that 1-3 are all in the same register whereas Categories 4-7 involve a stylistic/register change. In 6.2.2 I present the pragmatic and syntactic constraint interaction for structures 1-3. Due to the distribution of interrogatives in the corpus, the candidate set in 6.2.2 is limited to these very three structures. I analyze those interrogative structures for which I believe there is a pragmatic distinction followed by

special cases when illocutionary factors come to play. In contrast, Section 6.2.3 treats the case of a candidate set involving all seven attested structures. There, I look at stylistically-motivated interrogative variation. Once again, the analysis relies on findings in the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

6.2.1 Input and faithfulness for French interrogatives

One key to the success of OT clarifying interrogatives is the information available in the input. I begin by establishing the word order of the input, in particular the word order of the open propositions associated with interrogatives and the non-interrogative counterpart. Tableau 6.11 demonstrates the case where the word order of the output matches that of the input for an open proposition.

Tableau 6.11

tu vois [<i>quelque chose</i>]	FAITH I-O [Word order]
☛ tu vois <i>quelque chose</i>	
<i>quelque chose</i> tu vois	*!

Lexicon optimization as defined by Prince and Smolensky (1993) proposes that the input selected for any form should be the one closest to the output unless empirical evidence suggests otherwise. The input for the open proposition, supported by empirical evidence as well, is determined to be the same word order as for the output. The word order of the input of an open proposition is thereby considered to be Subject + Verb + X (variable) for interrogatives and declaratives alike. Tableau 6.11a demonstrates faithfulness to word order input for a declarative.

Tableau 6.11a

tu vois <i>X</i> X= un écureuil	FAITH I-O [Word order]
☞ tu vois <i>un écureuil</i>	
<i>un écureuil</i> tu vois	*!

Tableau 6.11b demonstrates faithfulness to word order input for the corresponding interrogative.

Tableau 6.11b

tu vois <i>X</i> X=Q=inanimate argument	FAITH I-O [Word order]
☞ tu vois <i>quoi</i>	
<i>quesque</i> tu vois	*!

Formulating the word order of the input is important for incorporation of a syntactic faithfulness constraint. In the analysis that follows, this particular faithfulness constraint is referred to as:

InterrogativeSyntax [InterrrrSynt] I-O: word order of output corresponds to word order of input.

This constraint is similar to the STAY (or SPC) faithfulness constraint seen in the analyses presented in 6.1 above but without multiple violations. Section 6.2.3.1 evaluates the pertinence of this constraint especially when used alongside pragmatic alignment constraints.

In addition to word order, the input in this analysis contains context-specific pragmatic information on activation, answerability and expectedness. This follows the components of input as implemented by Choi. I propose that the input includes the following pragmatic information: +/- answerable, +/-active, +/- expected. Tableau 6.11c illustrates the presentation of input discussed thus far:

Tableau 6.11c

tu vois <i>X</i> X=Q=inanimate argument [+ANS] [+ACT] [+EXP]	InterrSynt I-O
☛ tu vois <i>quoi</i>	
<i>quesque</i> tu vois	*!

By extension, other relevant parameters discussed in Chapter 4 are also important variables in the input. For example, the illocutionary parameters such as reported (quoted) speech, communicative function, etc. are treated like the pragmatic information and considered part of the input. This particular layer of input is germane to the discussion in 6.2.2.2, which demonstrates cases where pragmatic effects are neutralized. The last piece of pertinent information in the input for this case study pertains to sociolinguistic variables that indicate the register and the “interactional intention” of the speaker. Incorporating these variables comprises the discussion in Section 6.2.3.

Figure 6.1 illustrates the complete inventory of information to be included in the input.

Figure 6.1

Subject+ Verb+ <i>X</i> X=Q [+/-ANS] [+/-ACT] [+/-EXP] [+/-Interlocutor-addressed] [+/-quoted] Register= “colloquial”/ “formal” / “informal” Intention=[+neutral, -neutral/formal, -neutral/informal]

Admittedly, this particular input inventory is much larger and comprehensive than that of traditional analyses. However, it follows from the discussions in Chapters Four and Five that many parameters of analysis are necessary for understanding interrogative use. For purposes of simplicity, not all of this information encoded in the input is indicated in every tableau of the analysis below.

6.2.2 Semantico-Pragmatic Variation

This section analyzes variation among structures which all belong to the same register. As mentioned earlier, many previous studies have either claimed that all interrogative variation is sociolinguistic or that it is attributable to free-variation. In contrast, I am working according to the claim that an important difference among the most frequent structures in the corpus is pragmatic in nature.

This section treats three cases: constraints and OT analysis needed to differentiate between fronted and *in situ* questions in unmarked interlocutor-addressed questions (6.2.2.1) 2), in marked communicative situations (6.2.2.2) 2) and finally constraints and OT analysis needed to differentiate between questions with and without verbs (6.2.2.3).

It has been observed that not all question expressions behave alike. It was discussed in Chapter 4 that this difference in behavior is linked to inherent answerability. Regardless of the cause of the difference in behavior, it is an important and relevant tendency. Consistent with Grimshaw's (1997) constraint OPSPEC and Vikner's (2001) more specific WHSP (WH-operators in specifier position) I propose a markedness constraint called QCOMP:

QCOMP: Q element in COMP position

Inspired by Bakovic (1998), I propose a family (subhierarchy) of QComp constraints:

ARGQComp: Argument operators must be in COMP position

LOCQComp: Location operators must be in COMP position

MANQComp: Manner operators must be in COMP position

REASQComp: Reason operators must be in COMP position.

Although he doesn't have a specific constraint in his case for '*quanto*', I postulate a similar constraint for interrogative expressions that are quantifiers:

QUANTQComp: Quantifier operators must be in COMP position.

This subhierarchy allows for pragmatics to affect different question words to a different degree. This distinction is fundamental in order to be true to the data observations in the Barnes-Blyth corpus and elsewhere. This particular constraint promotes the Q proV structure.

In contrast, the pragmatic features encoded in the input are subject to alignment constraints. These alignment constraints are motivated by the observed tendencies of *in situ* behavior.

ALIGN(Answ/rt): Align question expression of highly answerable question with right edge of interrogative clause.

ALIGN(Act/rt): Align question expression of highly active open proposition with right edge of interrogative clause.

ALIGN (Exp/rt): Align expected question expression with right edge of interrogative clause.

These alignment constraints, in contrast with the QCOMP constraints encourage the proV Q structure in certain pragmatic contexts. The faithfulness word order constraint, InterrSynt I-O introduced in 6.2.1 also encourages the proV Q structure but without regard to pragmatic context.

For interlocutor-addressed questions, the ranking for these three types of constraints is initially proposed as follows:

REASQComp>> ALIGN-Ans <> ALIGN-Act <> ALIGN-Exp <> InterrSynt I-O
ALIGN-Act<>ALIGN-Exp>>MANQComp>> ALIGN-Ans<>InterrSynt I-O
ALIGN-Ans<>ALIGN-Act <>ALIGN-Exp >> QUANTQComp >>InterrSynt I-O
InterrSynt I-O <>ALIGN-Ans <> ALIGN-Act <> ALIGN-Exp >> LOCQComp
ALIGN-Ans <> ALIGN-Act <> ALIGN-Exp >> ARGQComp>>InterrSynt I-O

This proposed ranking is tested and illustrated in the next section.

6.2.2.1 Q proV versus proV Q

At this point, it is possible to analyze the choice between Q proV and proV Q. I address the above proposed ranking case-by-case. The first proposed ranking is REASQComp>> ALIGN-Act <> ALIGN-Ans <> ALIGN-Exp <> InterrSynt I-O. From the data in the Barnes-Blyth corpus it appears that the constraint REASQComp is unviolated. In the Example 6.1, although the CP of the open proposition is highly active (a situation encouraging *in situ*), the question word is in COMP.

Example 6.1

- E. Mais le .. ça ça m'étonne que ce soit si cher, les yogurts. Je parle pas des autres fromages, mais /inaudible/
M. Tu dis yogurt?
E. Oui.
M. Tu dis pas yaourts?
E. Non. /soft chuckle/
M. Comment tu dis toi?
C. Yaourt. Yaourt et yogurt c'est /inaudible/
M. Alors **pourquoi tu dis yogurt toi?**
C. Parce que en anglais c'est yogurt! Et /inaudible/
E. Parce que on, j'ai toujours dit], j'ai toujours dit ça, même à la maison, en France
C. Ah bon.
E. on dit yogurt.

Tableau 6.12

tu dis yogurt <i>pour X raison</i> X=Q=reason (<i>pourquoi</i>) [-ANS] [-EXP] [+ACT]	REASQ Comp	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	ALIGN- Ans(Rt)	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	InterrSynt I-O
☛ pourquoi tu dis yogurt toi?		*			*
tu dis yogurt pourquoi toi?	*!				

From Tableau 6.12, the ranking REASQCOMP>>ALIGN-Act(Rt)<> InterrSynt I-O is established. I claim that the initially proposed ranking REASQComp>> ALIGN-Ans <> ALIGN-Act <> ALIGN-Exp holds since *pourquoi* is categorically absent *in situ*.

Next I analyze the ranking for interrogative expressions of manner. The proposed ranking is as follows: ALIGN-Act<>ALIGN-Exp>>MANQComp>>ALIGN-Ans.<> InterrSynt I-0. Example 6.2 provides an utterance with high activation and high expectedness.

Example 6.2

- M. Et quand je parle de poinçon à la femme
 E. Tu as rien vu? Et dans le décor
 M. elle sait même pas de quoi je parle.
 C. Ah bon?
 M. Non, on a cherché, on a cherché et
 E. Et comment ça se dit poinçon éventuellement? Vous avez trouvé un équivalent?
 M. Non euh
 E. Non? Parce que je sais pas du tout comment on peut dire ça. Peut-être que ça se, je sais pas. Ben alors comment ils reconnaissent, les pourcentages?
 M. Ben moi j'ai regardé sur euh, j'ai j'ai un bijou en or
 E. C'est curieux.
 M. en or, que mes beaux parent m'ont offert
 E. Ouais
 M. je l'ai cherché, je l'ai jamais trouvé.
 E. Tiens, c'est curieux, ça!
 M. /inaudible/ je t'assure un bijou /inaudible/ ils ont dû se ruiner!
 C. Alors le poinçon pour l'argent c'est pas le même que pour l'or, hein!
 E. Non, c'est différent.
 C. **Mm Le poinçon d'argent c'est comment?**
 E. Euh je sais plus.

Tableau 6.13 demonstrates the ranking ALIGN-Act<>ALIGN-Exp>>MANQComp. The expectedness constraint may be redundant for manner interrogatives.

Tableau 6.13

c'est de X manière X=Q=manner (<i>comment</i>) [+EXP] [+ACT] [-ANS]	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	MANQComp
☞ le poinçon d'argent c'est comment?			*

le poinçon d'argent comment c'est?	*!	*!	
------------------------------------	----	----	--

Example 6.3 displays one of the many meta-linguistic translation questions in the corpus that are unexpected but highly answerable.

Example 6.3

- M. Et puis c'est de la bonne santé .. je veux dire euh healthy, **comment on dit en français?**
C. Mm /laugh/ C'est bon pour la santé.
M. Oui! /laugh/

Illustrating the above example, Tableau 6.14 displays the proposed ranking
MANQComp >> ALIGN-Ans <> InterrSynt I-O.

Tableau 6.14

on dit en français <i>de X façon</i> X=Q=manner (<i>comment</i>) [+ANS] [-EXP] [-ACT]	MANQComp	ALIGN-Ans(Rt)	InterrSynt I-O
☛ comment on dit en français?		*	*
on dit comment en français?	*!		

Next I discuss the proposed ranking for questions of quantity: ALIGN-Ans <> ALIGN-Act <> ALIGN-Exp >> QUANTQComp >> InterrSynt I-O. Example 6.4 illustrates a proV Q interrogative with high answerability:

Example 6.4

- E. C'est un festival. Et ça commence euh donc la, cette semaine, là
 B. Ce soir.
 E. Euh ce soir, même, oui. y a .. attends, les Les Petites Fugues, ce soir?
 C. Oh! J'aurais voulu, voir Les Petites Fugues.
 E. Et puis La Belle Emmerdeuse, oui Ben je crois
 B. C'est /inaudible/ A neuf heures et quart
 E. C'est que ce soir?
 B. /laugh/
 E. C'est que ce soir? Moi aussi, parce que ça a été euh franco-suisse, celui-là
 C. C'est que ce soir?
 B. Non non!
 C. /inaudible/
 B. Non non!
 M. **C'est combien euh la place de cinéma?**
 E. Euh c'est attends, tu as une réduction de 50 ce, euh cents, si tu es étudiante euh en français, où quand tu enseignes tu dois l'avoir aussi, je suppose /laugh/

Tableau 6.15 illustrates the outranking of QUANTQComp by two pragmatic alignment constraints. Once again, two of the pragmatic variables, in this case, answerability and expectedness are difficult to tease apart.

Tableau 6.15

c'est <i>X</i> quantité X=Q=quantifier (<i>combien</i>) [+ANS] [+EXP] [-ACT]	ALIGN- Ans(Rt)	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	QUANTQ Comp	InterrSynt I-O
☞c'est combien?				*	
combien c'est?	*!	*!			*

Tableau 6.15 has revealed the ranking ALIGN-Ans(Rt)<>ALIGN-Exp(Rt)>>QUANTQComp. Although there are not many utterances with *combien* in the data available, I assume the ranking QUANTQComp>>InterrSynt I-O due to the possibility of *combien* proV in the corpus.

Next I discuss the proposed constraint ranking for *quand* and *où* (location interrogatives): InterrSynt I-O <>ALIGN-Ans <> ALIGN-Act <> ALIGN-Exp >> LOCQComp. I begin with Example 6.5 where the answerability is deemed high yet the other pragmatic constraints are not applicable for our purposes.

Example 6.5

- E. Mais là oui, j'ai préféré, je j'avais le le, et puis c'était pas cher, c'était cent, attends, le, c'était cent quatre vingt dix huit dollars, aller-retour, y avait un prix spécial, et c'est
- C. **C'était quand?**
- E. Euh mm, c'était pour Noël, pour le tu sais, la

Tableau 6.16

c'est à <i>X temps</i> X= Q=location (<i>quand</i>) [+ANS]; [-EXP] [-ACT]	InterrSynt I-O	ALIGN-Ans(Rt)	ALIGN-Exp(Rt)	ALIGN-Act(Rt)	LOCQ Comp
☛c'était quand?					*
quand c'était?	*!	*!			

Tableau 6.16 has justified the ranking InterrSynt I-O<>ALIGN-Ans(Rt)>>LOCQComp. However there are no tokens of the structure Q proV in the Barnes-Blyth corpus where the question expression is *quand*. It is therefore imperative to assess the possible influence of inherent answerability or a syntactic constraint on that combination. Another likely explanation is that InterrSynt I-O is undominated for this question expression.

The case of question expression *où* is much more frequent in the Barnes-Blyth corpus. In example 6.6, the answerability is high, the expectedness is high but the activation is accessible.

Example 6.6

- C. En tous les cas tes chaussures elles sont bien!
- E. Oui elles sont très pratiques.

- M. Elles ont l'air souple, elles ont l'air souple.
 E. Très pratiques. J' aime pas les t
 M. **Tu les as eues où?**
 E. En France. J'aime pas les tennis.

Tableau 6.17 therefore indicates a potential ranking of InterrSynt I-O<>ALIGN-
 Ans(Rt)<>ALIGN-Exp(Rt)>>LOCQComp.

Tableau 6.17

tu les a eues à un endroit X X=Q=Location (où) [+ANS] [+EXP] [-ACT]	InterrSynt I-O	ALIGN- Ans(Rt)	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	LOCQ Comp
☛ tu les a eues où?					*
où tu les a eues?	*!	*!	*!		

Contrast the previous example of the question expression appearing *in situ* with a case with *où* in COMP where the expectedness is very low but is highly answerable.

Example 6.7

- E. Oui, mais euh alors attends. Ces ces deux films-là, c'est pas tout, euh c'est pas toute cette semaine, hein.
 B. Non, ça change /inaudible/
 E. Tu as pas eu le, Bell Museum?
 C. Si, moi je l'ai, mais à la maison, je l'ai
 B. Moi je l'ai
 C. puis je l'ai regardé tellement /inaudible/
 M. **Merci, merci, où vous avez eu ça?**
 B. Euh c'est Joyce, qui l'avait distribué, à tout le monde
 E. Tiens, vraiment?

This particular case indicates the need to either add a system for violations for misapplied Alignment constraints or to reconsider the proposed ranking for LOCQComp as in Tableau 6.18:

Tableau 6.18

vous avez eu ça à un endroit X X= Q=location (où) [+ANS] [-EXP] [+ACT]	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	LOCQ Comp	ALIGN- Ans(Rt)	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	InterrSynt I-O
→ où vous avez eu ça?			*	*	*
vous avez eu ça où?		*!			

The ranking $\text{ALIGN-Exp(Rt)} \gg \text{LOCQComp} \gg \text{ALIGN-Act(Rt)} \langle \text{ALIGN-Ans(Rt)} \rangle \text{InterrSynt I-O}$ then is able to account for both Examples 6.6 and 6.7 but not 6.5. This observation discourages considering the two location operators together. Indeed from what was observed in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, their behavior was quite different.

As mentioned in Chapters 4 and 5, the cases where Q=argument (*quesque/quoi*) represent the only true variation between fronted and *in situ* structures. Answerability is not applied blindly to this inanimate argument. The proposed ranking for this question expression is as follows: $\text{ALIGNAllPrag} \gg \text{ARGQComp} \gg \text{InterrSynt I-O}$.

Let's examine several examples where the current constraints successfully account for the variation. In Example 6.8, we have a case where the question word is in post-verbal position when the pragmatic context is highly answerable, highly expected and highly active.

Example 6.8

- B. Le, hand-ball, c'est autre chose, ici!
M. Ici c'est autre chose?
E.C. Ah bon?
M. Oui, ça je savais!
E. Alors c'est quoi?
B. C'est comme euh racket ball, mais avec les mains
M. Voilà!

Tableau 6.19 illustrates the ranking $\text{ALIGN-Ans(Rt)} \langle \rangle \text{ALIGN-Exp(Rt)} \langle \rangle \text{ALIGN-Act(Rt)} \gg \text{ARGQComp}$.

Tableau 6.19

c'est X X=Q= inanimate argument [+ANS] [+EXP] [+ACT]	ALIGN- Ans(Rt)	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	ARGQComp
☛ c'est quoi?				*
qu'est-ce que c'est?	*!	*!	*!	

In this next example of *quesque/quoi* variation, we have a case where the question word is fronted in a pragmatic context of low answerability, low expectedness and low activity.

Example 6.9

- E. les Baptistes, euh, c'est un, c'est, ce ça va c'est plutôt des protestants, et bien, alors là, les Baptistes, hein, c'est que /inaudible/ il faut s'accrocher, hein les Baptistes, ici, j'ai rencontré une famille /chortle/ ouh la la
- M. Moi le le le le luthérianisme, ils sont libéraux, de, de ma connaissance, c'est libéral
- C. Ouais.
- M. Et alors les Mormons, **qu'est-ce que c'est?**
- E. Ah ça c'est encore .. autre chose.

Tableau 6.20 illustrates $\text{ALIGN-Ans(Rt)} \langle \rangle \text{ALIGN-Exp(Rt)} \langle \rangle \text{ALIGN-Act(Rt)} \gg \text{ARGQComp} \gg \text{InterrSynt I-O}$. Once again, as currently defined, the alignment constraints receive no violations for an *in situ* structure with [-pragmatic features] combination. But in this case, the ranking $\text{ARGQComp} \gg \text{InterrSynt I-O}$ is relevant.

Tableau 6.20

c'est X X=Q= inanimate argument [-ANS] [-EXP] [-ACT]	ALIGN- Ans(Rt)	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	ARGQComp	InterrSynt I-O
☞ qu'est-ce que c'est?					*!
c'est quoi?				*!	

Not all of the *quesque/quoi* variation can be accounted for with the current apparatus. Let's look at two examples. In the first case, Example 6.10 the fronted structure is used whereas in the second case, 6.11 the post-verbal structure is used. The pragmatic contexts are quite similar. They are both meta-linguistic in nature where the speaker is asking about the definition of a referent.

Example 6.10

- E. Alors et ben moi, j'ai été cheftaine, mais enfin c'était un peu différent, mais c'était pas, pas trop difficile.
M. mm **Qu'est-ce que c'est cheftaine?**
E. Cheftaine tu sais le, le mouvement des guides de France. Je sais pas si tu as entendu parler de ça.

According to my analyses, I would predict that this utterance be post-verbal instead of pre-verbal due to high answerability. Instead, for some reason, as exemplified in Tableau 6.21 a violation of ALIGN-Ans(Rt) is not fatal. This may be due to a misapplication of the [+ANS] variable; the interrogative in Example 6.10 is less answerable than the one in 6.11 a fact if taken into account would once again illustrate the ARGQComp>>InterrSynt I-O ranking.

Tableau 6.21

c'est X X= Q=argument [+ANS] [-EXP] [-ACT]	ALIGN- Ans(Rt)	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	ARGQComp	InterrSynt I-O
☞ qu'est-ce que c'est cheftaine?	*?				*
⊗ c'est quoi cheftaine?				*	

Example 6.11 in comparison with Example 6.10 has the same input.

Example 6.11

- C. Oui, mais les deux autres ont pris, qu'est-ce qu'ils ont pris? Du machin avec du felafel.
M. Felafel.
E. **C'est quoi felafel?**
B. Ah ça me dit quelque chose.
M. C'est des, c'est des ... je sais pas comment on dit euh

However, in contrast with the failure of the analysis seen in Tableau 6.21, Tableau 6.22 illustrates a fatal violation of the highly ranked ALIGN-Ans(Rt) constraint.

Tableau 6.22

c'est X X=Q=inanimate argument [+ANS] [-EXP] [-ACT]	ALIGN- Ans(Rt)	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	ARGQ Comp	Interr Synt I-O
☞ c'est quoi felafel?				*	
qu'est-ce que c'est felafel?	*!				*

The *quesque/quoi* alternation would be an appropriate case for a continuous ranking scale, partial ordering or stochastic OT (Boersma 2003, 2004). There are certain tendencies that are followed that would be heavily weighted such as ALIGN-[+Prag]Rt. However, there are cases when the apparently unexpected occurs explicable by statistic probability.

To conclude this section, the constraints and attested rankings are reformulated as follows:

REASQComp >> ALIGN-AllPrag(Rt) <> InterrSynt I-O

ALIGN-Act(Rt) <> ALIGN-Exp(Rt) >> MANQComp

MANQComp >> ALIGN-Ans <> InterrSynt I-O

ALIGN-Ans(Rt) <> ALIGN-Exp(Rt) >> QUANTQComp >> InterrSynt I-O

InterrSynt I-O <> ALIGN-Ans(Rt) >> LOCQComp (when LOC=*quand*)

ALIGN-Exp(Rt) >> LOCQComp >> ALIGN-Act(Rt) <> ALIGN-Ans(Rt) <> InterrSynt I-O (when LOC=*où*)

ALIGN-Ans(Rt) <> ALIGN-Exp(Rt) <> ALIGN-Act(Rt) >> ARGQComp >> InterrSynt I-O

These faithfulness, markedness and alignment constraints were able to reasonably account for the utterances exemplified above. In many cases, the word order constraint is redundant with the pragmatic constraints. Overall, contexts involving interrogatives of reason, manner and quantity fared better in this analysis than those of location and argument. Crucially, distinctions among the Alignment constraints remain to be articulated as well as the role of syntactic faithfulness versus inherent answerability.

6.2.2.2 Illocutionary Features

Apparent exceptions to pragmatic leverage are found within communicative features. As discussed in Chapter 4, the pragmatic effects on interrogative syntax are only relevant for interlocutor-addressed questions. Similar to pragmatic information, communicative information such as type of question: +/- interlocutor-addressed and +/- quoted are also included in the input. There are two major ways of accounting for the lack of pragmatic effect on [-interlocutor-addressed] and [+quoted] interrogatives. The

first involves refining the definition of the alignment constraints on some level. For instance, the ALIGN constraint could be defined as follows:

ALIGN(AllPrag/rt): Align QU of highly answerable/highly active/highly expected with right edge of [+interlocutor-addressed] [-quoted] question

In this case, we are defining *in situ* compatibility as uniquely applicable to interlocutor-addressed questions that are not quoted. Any right-edge alignment with a [-interlocutor-addressed] question or [+quoted] question would constitute a violation. Consider Example 6.12 which is [+interlocutor-addressed] and [-quoted] which complies with both requirements of the ALIGN constraint.

Example 6.12

- C. Oui mais alors ma chambre elle était toute petite, pour le pour le prix que je payais.
 E. **Tu payais combien alors?**
 C. Je payais 175 dollars et into and too utilities not included.
 E. C'est vrai?!
 C. mm ouais
 E. Ouais moi avant

The corresponding Tableau 6.25 illustrates the ranking ALIGN-Ans(Rt)<>ALIGN-Exp(Rt)<>ALIGN-Act(Rt)>>QUANTQComp>>InterrSynt I-O. This particular tableau is consistent with the findings from the previous section.

Tableau 6.25

tu payais <i>X quantité</i> X=Q=quantifier (<i>combien</i>) [+ANS] [+EXP] [+ACT] [+interlocutor addressed] [-quoted]	ALIGN- Ans(Rt)	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	QUANT QComp	InterrSynt I-O
☛tu payais combien?				*	
combien tu payais?	*!	*!	*!		*

In the next example, 6.13, the interrogative is [+interlocutor-addressed] but [+quoted]. According to the new formulation of the Alignment constraint as stated

above, the *in situ* interrogative presents a violation because it is part of [+quoted] speech. Without the rhetorical stipulation, the pragmatic features would have promoted an *in situ* interrogative structure.

Example 6.13:

- M. C'était fini. Alors je rentre à la maison, évidemment, Papa et Maman attendaient anxieux, demandent
 E. Oui, c'est ça
 M.E. les résultats!
 M. Parce que moi ils ils, ils s'occupaient de moi, minutieusement
 E. Oh oui moi aussi! /laugh/
 M. Et puis et puis alors euh, Papa me disait, saut en hauteur, **co, combien, combien tu as?** Un mètre euh, et puis j'ai dit, ben, ben non euh
 E. Non.
 M. Je sais pas.

Tableau 6.26 illustrates the same ranking as above: ALIGN-Ans(Rt)<>ALIGN-Exp(Rt)<>ALIGN-Act(Rt)>>QUANTQComp>>InterrSynt I-O but in this case reveals another way that the alignment constraints can be violated.

Tableau 6.26

tu as <i>X</i> <i>quantité</i> X=Q=quantifier (<i>combien</i>) [+ANS] [+EXP] [+ACT] [+interlocutor-addressed] [+quoted]	ALIGN- Ans(Rt)	ALIGN- Exp(Rt)	ALIGN- Act(Rt)	QUANTQComp	InterrSynt I-O
☞ combien tu as?					*
tu as combien?	*!	*!	*!	*	

Note that the issue of whether or not overapplication of the alignment constraints constitutes a violation or not is irrelevant in this context due to the QuantQComp>>InterrSynt I-O ranking.

The second manner in which to treat the different reactions to the pragmatic environment according to illocutionary feature is by constraint re-ranking. In this case,

anytime the interrogative had the features [-interlocutor-addressed] or [+quoted] then the relevant QComp constraint would be unviolated. It would outrank both the alignment constraints and the word order faithfulness constraint in all cases: QComp>>AlignPrag(Rt) <> InterrSynt I-O. I now reconsider the previous two examples in the context of a re-ranking. The first example displays the general ranking AlignPrag(Rt)>>QUANTQComp>>InterrSynt I-O. This ranking is triggered by the features [+interlocutor-addressed] and [-quoted]. Tableau 6.27 is a recapitulation of Tableau 6.25 above with the alignment constraints packaged for the sake of simplicity.

Tableau 6.27

tu payais <i>X quantité</i> X=Q=quantifier (<i>combien</i>) [+ANS] [+EXP] [+ACT] [+interlocutor addressed] [-quoted]	AlignPrag(Rt)	QUANTQComp	Interr Synt I-O
☛ tu payais combien?		*	
combien tu payais?	*!		*

For the interpretation of Example 6.13 according to the re-ranking hypothesis, the illocutionary feature [+quoted] triggers re-ranking such that QUANTQComp >>AlignPrag(Rt) <>InterrSynt I-O.

Tableau 6.28

tu as <i>X quantité</i> X=Q=quantifier (<i>combien</i>) [+ANS] [+ EXP] [+ACT] [+interlocutor-addressed] [+quoted]	QUANTQComp	AlignPrag(Rt)	InterrSynt I-O
☛ combien tu as?		*	*
tu as combien?	*!		

I now present the two alternatives in the context of rhetorical questions [-interlocutor-addressed]. For both cases, the analysis follows Example 6.14.

Example 6.14

- C. Moi le livre qui m'a fait le plus, rire, de toute ma vie.
M. Je vois que Toto lit Toto.
C. Hein?
M. C'est pas Toto lit Toto? /chuckle/ Il fout ses noix de coco devant lui.
C. Non.
M. /laugh/
C. **Pour qui elle me prend?**
M. /laugh/ Ben je sais pas!
C. Non, c'est un, un livre de Jérôme K. Jérôme

First, I deliberate the constraint reformulation alternative: AlignPragRt>> ARGQComp>>InterrSynt I-O. In this case, the *in situ* interrogative violates the Alignment constraint since it has the feature [-interlocutor-addressed]. Or as mentioned above, the alignment constraint may just be irrelevant leaving the evaluation to ARGQComp>>InterrSynt I-O.

Tableau 6.29

elle me prend pour X X=Q=[+human]argument (<i>qui</i>) [-ANS] [-EXP] [-ACT] [-interlocutor addressed] [- quoted]	AlignPragRt	ARGQComp	InterrSynt I-O
☛ pour qui elle me prend?			*
elle me prend pour qui?	*!	*	

Next, I consider the re-ranking alternative where ARGQComp>> AlignPragRt<> InterrSynt I-O. In this situation, the *in situ* alternative is in violation of the higher ranked constraint requiring the question expression in COMP.

Tableau 6.30

elle me prend pour X X=Q=[+human]argument (<i>qui</i>) [-ANS] [-EXP] [-ACT] [-interlocutor addressed] [-quoted]	ARGQComp	AlignPragRt	InterrSynt I-O
←pour qui elle me prend?			*
elle me prend pour qui?	*!		

Note that in this particular case, the constraint AlignPragRt plays no role since the pragmatic conditions are not compatible with the constraint. This particular combination of variables demonstrates a context where the faithfulness constraint is indeed relevant.

It is important to point out that while the [+quoted] case is nearly categorical the [-interlocutor-addressed] case is less so. While rhetorical questions are practically impossible in the *in situ* position, self-addressed questions are possible post-verbal. Self-addressed questions, unlike rhetorical questions do provide more interesting cases for pragmatic involvement. Consider the following example of a self-addressed question.

Example 6.15

- C. Oui, mais les deux autres ont pris, **qu'est-ce qu'ils ont pris?** Du machin avec du felafel.

According to the interlocutor-addressed rankings, this question should surface as *ils ont pris quoi* but the illocutionary feature accommodations predict otherwise. Once again, the first tableau, 6.31 demonstrates the constraint reformulation option.

Tableau 6.32

ils ont pris X X=Q= inanimate argument [+ANS] [+EXP] [+ACT] [-interlocutor-addressed] [- quoted]	AlignPrag(Rt)	ARGQComp	InterrSynt I-O
☞ qu'est-ce qu'ils ont pris?			*
ils ont pris quoi?	*!	*	

Tableau 6.32 displays the constraint re-ranking option.

Tableau 6.32

ils ont pris X X=Q= inanimate argument [+ANS] [+EXP] [+ACT] [-interlocutor-addressed] [- quoted]	ARGQComp	AlignPrag(Rt)	InterrSynt I-O
☞ qu'est-ce qu'ils ont pris?		*	*
ils ont pris quoi?	*!		

The two possibilities for treating the effects of illocutionary features on interrogative choice as presented in this section provide very different means to an end. The advantage of the re-ranking approach is that the constraint itself remains very clean. The reformulation approach creates a much more convoluted constraint. However constraint re-rankings pose a general problem for OT by making it less universal.

In summary, for the case of Alignment constraint reformulation the ranking of constraints remains the same as those presented in 6.2.3.1. In contrast, the re-ranking approach involves an unequivocal QCOMP>>ALIGN-PRAG(Rt).

6.2.2.3 Q alone

In this section, I examine the constraints relevant for understanding the choice of the Q alone structure. As seen in Chapters 4 and 5, the Q alone structure is used for highly active pragmatic situations for interlocutor-addressed questions but low or high answerability. The constraint that encourages the structure Q alone is part of a family of constraints under the umbrella *Redundant. The particular *Redundant constraint at play for the Q alone structure is *Red(Top).

***Red(Top):** No redundant SV elements.

This constraint is in conflict with a faithfulness constraint MAX.

MAX(SV): All SV components in the input must correspond to SV components in the output.

The proposed ranking for these two constraints is: *RED(Top)>>MAX(SV). A simplified ranking schema involving QCOMP and AlignPrag(Rt) is also implemented in this analysis.

In the first example, a very redundant topical component violates the *Red(Top) constraint and so the unfaithful candidate wins.

Example 6.16

- E. tu étais étudiante à Paris?
C. Mm
E. **Où donc?**
C. A Jussieu.
E. Jussieu?
C. Gris. Gris et brun.

Tableau 6.33

c'est à un endroit <i>X</i> X=Q=location (où)	*Red(Top)	MAX(SV)
☛ où donc?		*
c'est où donc?	*!	
où c'est donc?	*!	

Compare the previous example where the subject/verb information is redundant with Example 6.17 illustrating very similar input but the output has a surfaced subject and verb.

Example 6.17

- C. Euh pour un two bedroom apartment, ça fait 145 dollars par mois .. et euh ca fait même moins cher que la petite chambre
 E mm
 M. Oui
 C. que j'avais toute seule
 E. Utilités euh comprises?
 C. Oui! Oui!
 E. Et et c'est où cette fois-ci?
 M. C'est bien ça /inaudible/
 C. C'est euh .. c'est euh uptown c'est .. euh
 E. Uptown?
 C. Ouais

Tableau 6.34

c'est à un endroit <i>X</i> X=Q=location (où) [+ANS] [+ EXP] [+ACT]	*Red(Top)	MAX(SV)	Align Prag(Rt)	LocQ Comp
☛ c'est où?				*
où?		*!		
où c'est?			*!	

In the above tableau, neither the proV Q nor the Q proV candidates violate *Red(Top) since the SVC is necessary for communication. In this initial analysis, there

is no critical ranking between the two sets of constraints. Note also the oversimplified AlignPrag(Rt)>>LocQComp ranking used for purposes of clarity.

Next, let's examine cases where the pragmatic context is highly active but the answerability is low.

Example 6.18

- E. On ne dit pas un /wa/ oignon!
M. Ben alors **pourquoi**?

Tableau 6.35

on ne dit pas oignon <i>pour X raison</i> X=Q=reason (<i>pourquoi</i>) [-ANS] [-EXP] [+ACT]	*Red(Top)	MAX(SV)
☛ pourquoi?		*
pourquoi on ne dit pas oignon?	*	
on ne dit pas oignon pourquoi?	*	

The second and third unattested candidates in Tableau 6.35 are not equal since the third would violate ReasonQComp.

Compare the above example with the next thematically similar example (repeated from Example 6.1 above) but where the Q alone structure is not possible.

Example 6.19

- E. Mais le .. ça ça m'étonne que ce soit si cher, les yogurts. Je parle pas des autres fromages, mais /inaudible/
M. Tu dis yogurt?
E. Oui.
M. Tu dis pas yaourts?
E. Non. /soft chuckle/
M. Comment tu dis toi?
C. Yaourt. Yaourt et yogurt c'est /inaudible/
M. Alors **pourquoi tu dis yogurt toi**?
C. Parce que en anglais c'est yogurt! Et /inaudible/
E. Parce que on, j'ai toujours dit, j'ai toujours dit ça, même à la maison, en France
C. Ah bon.
E. on dit yogurt.

Tableau 6.36

tu dis yogurt <i>pour X raison</i> X=Q=reason (<i>pourquoi</i>) [-ANS] [-EXP] [+ACT]	*Red (Top)	MAX(SV)	REASQComp	Align Prag(Rt)
☞ pourquoi tu dis yogurt?				*
Pourquoi?		*!		
Tu dis yogurt pourquoi?			*!	

In the above example, although the SVC component is highly active, it is not redundant since the Q alone structure is not acceptable in this context. As seen in the earlier discussion of *pourquoi* structures, the proV Q structure is not really a viable candidate for the reason question word.

In summary, the analysis of the Q alone structure involves an additional faithfulness and markedness constraint with the ranking *RED(Topic) >> MAX(SV).

6.2.3 Sociolinguistic Variation

As discussed in Chapter 4, there are two types of style shifting in the corpus: switches to higher and lower registers. In this section, I explain the choice of the structures Q Vpro, Q esq proV, c'est Q que proV and Q c'est que proV. In order to understand the use of these structures, I posit a faithfulness constraint called Maintain Register.

MaintainRegister (MReg): Structures in the output should be faithful to the register.

This constraint implies several important properties of the input and grammar. First, as discussed earlier, the register must be defined in the input. In addition the interactional intention of the speaker must be defined whether neutral, formal (a display of power) or informal (display of intimacy). This leads to the competing faithfulness constraint:

InteractionalIntention (IntInt): Change register when intention is [-neutral].

Importantly, this proposal requires a speech community-wide knowledge of the associations of structures and stylistic evaluations.

In order to clarify the definitions and use of these constraints, let's begin with a neutral example.

Example 6.20

- M. Mais c'est un musicien donc, c'est c'est ça, un musicien.
E. Oh je lui ai dit mais qui est-ce qui t'as appris ces /inaudible/. Maintenant c'est des /inaudible/. Alors je dis ça c'est encore la c'est la nouvelle, la dernière tu vois.
C. Ah il faut vraiment être /inaudible/
E. Ah oui, ça c'est Tori tu sais. /laugh/ Enfin /laughs/ enfin .. Puis alors tu comprends là, le synthétiseur, tout, alors euh le micro, enfin quand tout est branché, c'est, c'est le, le rêve. /laugh/ Ah tu te sens .. transportée hein.
C. Mais il est musicien professionnel?
E. Non!
C. Il joue où?
E. Non non non .. euh .. bon, il a fait euh .. et de profe..., enfin de formation c'est un chimiste, mais /laugh/ actuellement /laugh/

The hypothesis claims the constraint ranking as follows: IntInt>>MReg but this ranking is superfluous in Tableau 6.37. Once again, an oversimplified AlignPrag(Rt)>>LOCQComp ranking is implemented for clarity.

Tableau 6.37

il joue à <i>un endroit X</i> X=Q=location (où) [+ANS] [-EXP] [-ACT] Register= “colloquial” Intention=neutral	IntInt	MReg	Align- Prag(Rt)	LOCQComp
☛ il joue où?				*
où il joue?			*!	
où joue-t-il?	*!	*		
où est-ce qu’il joue?	*!	*		
c’est où qu’il joue?	*!	*		
où c’est qu’il joue?	*!	*		

In the above example, the first candidate violates none of the register faithfulness constraints since the intention is neutral and a so-called colloquial interrogative was used in a colloquial register. Indeed the optimal candidate surfaces in this case thanks to the alignment constraint.

In Example 6.21, we observe an inversion structure where the intention has changed from [neutral] to [-neutral/formal]

Example 6.21

- M. y a différents niveaux de lecture.
E. Normalement si tu es un puriste, tu peux le pas dire euh euh tu si tu emploies le mot réaliser, et bien tu ne peux réaliser qu'une maquette ou quelque chose comme ça, normalement.
C. Quelque chose de .. solide, de concret
E. Oui de concret, mais maintenant on utilise ça euh
C. Ouais.
E. Alors y a des profs, en France, qui sont très puritains, qui te font remarquer. C'est
M. Ah oui.
E. Ah oui oui! oh ben.
B. /laugh/
E. Non, c'est vrai, et puis ah j'ai dit au niveau
M. Oh j'ai réalisé ce qu'elle avait dit /laughs/. **Que voulez-vous dire?**
E. Qu'elle a réalisé!
M. Retournez en première année!

Tableau 6.38 illustrates the ranking IntInt>>MReg since the Q Vpro structure is optimal even though it does not maintain the register of the communicative context.

Tableau 6.38

vous voulez dire X X=Q= inanimate argument [+ANS] [-EXP] [-ACT] Register= “colloquial” Intention=[-neutral/formal]	IntInt	MReg
☛ que voulez-vous dire?		*
vous voulez dire quoi?	*!	
qu’est-ce que vous voulez dire?	*!	

This proposed analysis appears to be inadequate in determining the choice between the two structures labeled [-neutral/formal] especially since they both involve a QinCOMP. Example 6.22 presents a token of the Q esq proV structure:

Example 6.22

- C. Mais c'est dingue!
E. Alors là vraiment
M. qui assistent Madame B.!
C. Mais c'est dingue, **comment est-ce que euh est-ce qu'on peut nous donner**
M. Ce que je comprends pas
C. **la responsabilité de, de de, de corriger des copies**
M. quand on a juste une connaissance, enfin de
C. **sur un cours, qu'on on**
M. Un cours où les gens ils payent euh quand même cinquante dollars le crédit, je ø sais pas combien, et et on a aucun /inaudible/ c'est un cours, un cours trois mille hein, ça veur dire qu'ils vont bientôt avoir leur license!

Tableau 6.39

on peut nous donner la responsabilité <i>de X manière</i> X=Q=manner (<i>comment</i>) [+ANS] [-EXP] [-ACT] Register= “colloquial” Intention=[-neutral/formal]	IntInt	MReg
comment est-ce qu’on peut nous donner la responsabilité?		*
comment nous donne-t-on la responsabilité?		*
comment on nous donne la responsabilité?	*!	

This observed obstacle for the proposed analysis could be resolved by implementing more gradience in the intention input. In other words the Q Vpro is more formal than the Q esq proV structure and this evaluation could be included as part of the input.

The next two examples demonstrate switching to a less formal register. Example 6.23 involves the interrogative type *c’est Q que proV* which as mentioned in Chapters 4 and 5 is used in highly presupposed contexts.

Example 6.23:

- C. C'est quand Garde à Vue?
E. Garde à Vue, c'est pas cette semaine, c'est l'autre. C'est vendredi, du vendredi, c'est du 16 au /throat clearing/ au 22, quelque chose comme ça. Oui je crois que c'est peut-être le 22, donc c'est pendant le week-end, hein. oui .. et puis jusqu'à mardi, je crois.
M. **Et c'est où que ça joue?**
C. Euh, Bell Museum.

In the case of *c’est Q que proV*, the alignment constraint is able to distinguish between the two structures associated with [-low register] as seen in Tableau 6.40:

Tableau 6.40

ça joue à <i>un endroit X</i> X=Q=location (où) [+ANS] [+EXP] [+ACT] Register= “colloquial” Intention=[-neutral/informal]	IntInt	MReg	Align- Prag(Rt)	LOCQCOMP
☛ c’est où que ça joue?		*		*
ça joue où?	*!			
où c’est que ça joue?		*	*!	

The next example involves the clefted structure Q c’est que proV where the interrogative intention is also [-neutral/informal].

Example 6.24:

- E. Oh y en a qui ont drôlement du travail! /inaudible/
M. Attends! Martha et Debby
C. Ouais./inaudible/
M. elles, elles ont assisté, elles assistent Madame
C. M.B.!
E. M.B.!
M. B., et ben, elles /shushing noises/, il faut /inaudible/ tout le livre et il faut qu'ils fassent des discussions de groupe chaque semaine, et qu'ils corrigent les devoirs.
E. /inaudible/ c'est ce qui m'est arrivé. C'est pour ça que
M. et **qui c'est que tu avais?**
E. R., bon Monsieur R. Bon alors j'ai corrigé
M. Et c'était dur?
E. ben j'ai corrigé le mid-term

Tableau 6.41 illustrates equal faithfulness violations for the two clefts that share the evaluation [-neutral/informal]. The additional constraints are not helpful in distinguishing between the two clefts.

Tableau 6.41

tu avais X [+ANS] [-EXP] [-ACT] X=Q=[+human] argument Register= “colloquial” Intention=[-neutral/informal]	IntInt	MReg	ALIGN- Prag(Rt)	ARGQinComp
☛ qui c’est que tu avais?		*	*	
tu avais qui?	*!			
qui tu avais?	*!	*		
c’est qui que tu avais?		*		*

Tableau 6.41 illustrates an issue similar to the problems observed for distinguishing between the [+formal] structures that reinforces the need to distinguish the evaluation of the [-formal] structures where Q c’est que proV is less formal than c’est Q que proV.

In summary, this section has illustrated the ranking of two faithfulness constraints IntInt >> MReg to account for socio-stylistic variation. It is essential to acknowledge that the candidates that violate the MaintainRegister constraint in the corpus also violate other important constraints particularly InterrSynt I-O. Further, Q esq proV, c’est Q que proV and Q c’est que proV used in the Barnes-Blyth corpus violate a constraint referred to as *Structure. Incorporating these constraints in the analysis, in addition to a gradient register evaluation of the structures may prove to be crucial for a more accurate account of the implementation of these less frequent structures.

This analysis of style diverges from the previous works as mentioned in 6.2 that assumed a stylistic re-ranking for various registers. Although the aforementioned approaches are appealing since they do not require the postulation of new constraints,

they are less desirable for the situation that involves stylistic register shifts such as in the Barnes-Blyth corpus.

6.2.4 Constraint and Candidate Summary

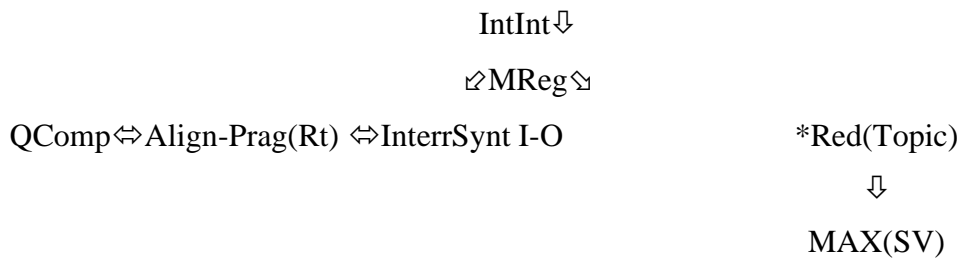
The final tableau shows the candidate set of WH-interrogatives in the Barnes-Blyth corpus and the constraints that each violates.

Tableau 6.43

/pro/ /V/ /Q/	Non-fatal Constraints Violated in Barnes-Blyth Corpus
proV Q	QComp
Q proV	ALIGN-Prag(Rt) / InterrSynt I-O
Q	MAX (SV)
Q V pro	proV (CANON) / MReg / InterrSynt I-O
Q esq pro V	*Structure / MReg / InterrSynt I-O
Q c'est que proV	*Structure / MReg / InterrSynt I-O
c'est Q que proV	* Structure / QComp / MReg

In addition, I present a simplified Hasse diagram to show the crucial dominance relations of the constraints relevant to interrogative choice:

Figure 6.1



The top two layers contain constraints involving sociolinguistic and register evaluations. Then below are the markedness and faithfulness constraints whose specific rankings are determined by the identity of the question expression or even the illocutionary factors involved. On the left are the constraints needed to distinguish proV

Q from Q pro V whereas the constraints on the right are necessary for illustrating the emergence of the Q alone structure.

6.3 SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

This conclusion evaluates this chapter in light of the success of the OT analysis of French interrogatives as well as how well the analysis furthers our understanding of the phenomenon. As could be seen in the review of the literature, interrogatives in general provide a concrete challenge for Optimality Theory due to their syntactic structure. Further, French interrogatives provide a particular challenge for any model due to the wide variation and the multiplicity of factors involved in their production. Previous OT studies involving French interrogatives often shared the perspective that interrogatives were a means for appreciating the theory. Additionally, most previous studies attributed variation in French interrogatives to stylistic variation rather than a spectrum of factors including the pragmatic, semantic and syntactic factors evoked in Chapter 4.

I maintain that no model thus far has accurately and/or comprehensively explained the complex system of French interrogatives. Chapter 4 of this dissertation outlined the parameters of analysis but left open the discussion of their potential interaction. The impetus for including Optimality Theory in this dissertation was to elucidate the relative importance of various factors from different areas of grammar.

Where this effort was particularly successful, in my opinion, was the clarification of the factors for the various question expressions. As seen in Chapter 4, the different behavior observed for the question expressions in French interrogatives muddled the understanding of the role of pragmatics in interrogative choice. By placing pragmatic information in the input alongside the more traditionally accepted syntactic word order information, optimal candidates were mostly chosen based on an interaction between a

markedness constraint promoting the Q proV structure and an alignment constraint influenced by the [+/-] value of the pragmatic features. In many cases, the optionality that posed problems in French interrogative analysis in previous studies was handled by a multi-componential approach. However, optionality remains especially in the case of *quesque/quoi* alternation as predicted and discussed in Chapter 5. The independence of the roles of the pragmatic concepts such as answerability, activation and expectedness remains to be resolved. Although the examination of the illocutionary and sociolinguistic factors requires further precision, the role and effect of these important features in interrogation was effectively demonstrated.

In conclusion, this particular OT analysis of French interrogatives distinguishes itself by the aforementioned distinct rankings for the various question expressions as well as the simultaneous incorporation of a variety of components of grammar as deemed necessary by the investigation of interrogatives provided in Chapters 4 and 5. Overall, this initial attempt at merging syntactic, pragmatic, semantic and sociolinguistic components of grammar in an OT analysis of French interrogatives shows promise for our understanding of the complex system of interrogatives in which structures are chosen for a principled reason.

Chapter 7: Summary and Conclusion

This dissertation has taken a comprehensive account of an issue that has been of interest to French linguists for centuries. WH-Interrogatives in Spoken French have proved to be a great challenge because of the number of forms, the complexity of forms and the lack of transparency in their usage. In this conclusion I evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of this contribution to the literature on French interrogatives. In addition, I contemplate the implications of this study for linguistics as well as suggest avenues for further investigation.

One contribution of this dissertation is the organized presentation of structures illustrated in Chapter 3. This particular arrangement of forms allows us to grasp the inter-connectedness of the structures according to the syntax of the question expression. The structures exemplified in this chapter were limited to those with pronoun subjects. This choice was made in response to the high frequency of pronoun subjects in corpora as well as a means of limiting the scope of this dissertation. In future discussions of this topic, a more comprehensive description including NPs would be an important next step.

A central feature of this dissertation is the evaluation of interrogative structures from a single communicative context, Sections I-III of the Barnes-Blyth corpus. The purpose of this self-imposed limitation was to evaluate interrogatives as part of a system. This choice was essential to understanding pragmatic differences since for the most part the register was fixed. It also helped create a continuum for understanding the associations between certain structures and their socio-stylistic evaluation. A significant disadvantage of this choice was the lack of examples and discussion of important and common features found in other contexts.

Due to the frequency distribution of interrogatives in the Barnes-Blyth corpus, the greatest insight involved clarifying Q proV versus proV Q. In Chapter 4, numerous factors were taken into account that could potentially affect the choice of interrogative structure. Many of these factors had been considered and compiled by Aidan Coveney in his extensive work on interrogatives in French. My addition to his work was multi-layered. In most cases, I took his factors and assessed how the data from the Barnes-Blyth corpus either supported or refuted his hypotheses. In other cases, I conducted a re-evaluation and closer inspection of factors he suggested such as “informativeness” or “end-focus”. In this situation, I took his notion that *in situ* questions were less informative and evaluated the contributions of information structure to test its validity. One of my goals pertaining to Coveney’s lists of factors was to discover over-arching umbrella principles that could somehow tie together the seemingly disparate categories. In response to this need, I developed the categories of questionness, expectedness and answerability.

In Chapter 5, I regarded all the structures introduced in Chapter 3 as potentially carrying a unique function. In other words, I looked at each structure in light of its socio-stylistic associations, frequency, and contextual usage. The inspiration for this effort came from the existence of extensive options available to a speaker of French to express a WH-interrogative. Why would all these structures exist if not to carry out a particular or significant role in interaction? This chapter represented an attempt at defining each interrogative structure of spoken French. Given the reality of spoken language, as well as the limited number of tokens for many structures, this task remains in early yet promising stages.

The complex system of interrogatives in spoken French cannot be explained by a single component of grammar. WH-questions prove to be a challenge for substantial

theories such as Information Structure and Relevance. These theories helped provide several interesting tendencies of interrogative use, but were unable to explain patterning on their own. Given that the linguistic areas of pragmatics, semantics and sociolinguistics were all necessary lenses for understanding interrogative use, in Chapter 6 I looked to Optimality Theory as a way of understanding how these factors interacted. OT, in this preliminary investigation was able to provide an initial key to understanding the factors at work in interrogative variation.

The issue of interrogatives and foreign language pedagogy has been treated extensively especially in terms of the larger dilemma concerning “Which French should we teach?” For many years, the teaching of French was connected solely with the cultivated norm. Along these lines, McCool (1994) found that “the current state of question formation in French is accurately portrayed in only a minority of first-year texts. And second-year texts...generally do a poorer job with respect to question formation (p. 58)”. Several recommendations for foreign language pedagogy arise from this study. First, at the very least, there should be raised awareness concerning the number of possible ways of asking a question in French at the advanced levels. Additionally, at the beginning levels, the *in situ* structure should be added to the list of commonly taught variants for spoken language.

In addition to the items mentioned thus far in this conclusion, there are many paths for continuing and strengthening the current study. A very important next step for supporting it would be to create a survey with contexts where native speakers would be asked to choose an interrogative form. This type of research would give the factors for choice discussed in Ch 4 validity not available in post facto analysis of corpora. With this method, the communicative context and pragmatic details could be controlled for an explicit understanding of the role of each factor, especially teasing apart the concepts of

answerability, expectedness and activation. Another avenue that is patently absent from this dissertation is the role of intonation in delivery and interpretation of interrogatives. Nilsenová (2006) acknowledges that the analysis of WH-interrogative intonation is particularly challenging especially in contrast with yes-no question intonation.

Concerning expansion, this examination of spoken French would be reinforced by an assessment of interrogative variation in dialects of French as well as regional variants. Do speakers of different regions of France use the interrogative structures available to them with the same pragmatic distribution? How do francophone speakers outside of France evaluate and use the structures? A particularly complex addition to this study would be a diachronic review of spoken French interrogative patterns. How long have the interrogative structures in French had the functions attributed to them in Chapter 5? In addition, combining the study of WH-questions with yes-no questions could be enlightening. Are yes-no questions that use intonation alone the pragmatic correlates of the *in situ* WH-interrogative? Is the *est-ce que* morpheme associated with politeness?

With an even more broad perspective, interrogative constructions provide an important basis for cross-linguistic comparison. The 1982 *Colloquium on Interrogativity* in Cleveland, Ohio (Chisholm et al, 1984) provides a starting point. In the plenary session of the colloquium, there was a general call for in depth studies of the pragmatics of interrogativity of a single language followed by a request for expansion expressed by Comrie: “We really need to look into different kinds of questions defined pragmatically and the different ways in which those pragmatic parameters can be realized cross-linguistically (p. 272)”. The patterns observed for interrogatives in Spoken French may prove to have some important correlates in other languages. These comparisons may provide further insight into the cognitive justifications for choosing variants over others as well as why particular structures are assigned certain pragmatic roles.

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